

SPEECHES

OF MESSRS.

LAURIER, WHITE, & DAVIES,

DELIVERED ON

Mr. Laurier's Amendment to Motion
to go into Supply.

IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OF CANADA,

TUESDAY, 20TH APRIL, 1886,

Mr. LAURIER. Before you leave the Chair, I desire to call the attention of the House to the neglect by the Government of the grievances of the half-breeds in the North-West Territories. The subject is a vast one; indeed it is so vast that I think it better not to bring under one single heading all the different grievances from which the half-breeds suffered, all the different derelictions of duty of which the Government, in my judgment, have been guilty, but to confine myself to a single one—the extinguishment of the Indian title, in so far as the half-breeds are concerned. And in bringing this matter to the attention of the House I could have wished that the Government had brought down the information which was to be laid before the House, according to promises often made and often repeated, but not yet fulfilled. The Government and their organs have told us time and again that the Government were in possession of information and evidence which, when it was placed before the House, would show them to be perfectly blameless. Yet, strange to say, by a strange contradiction, owing, I suppose, to the modesty or the sense of dignity of the Government, they have so far kept under a bushel the light which would have placed their conduct in a color so different from what it is now. The next time the Government should not stand on their dignity or their modesty to such an extent. If they have any evidence, it is time they brought it to the House; if they

have any defence to make, it is time they should make it. But without anticipating at all the other subjects which may come up afterwards for discussion, without anticipating the other grievances from which the half-breeds have suffered, in so far as the grievance of which I now complain is concerned, I venture to say without fear of successful contradiction that the record will show the Government to be guilty, and to be guilty without a single extenuating circumstance, without a single shadow of excuse. It has always been the policy of England, ever since she has had establishments in North America, to compensate the Indians for the dispossession of their lands. England, and all other Christian nations who planted colonies on this continent, always felt that it was not contrary to moral law to take possession, and even forcible possession, of territories which were roamed over rather than possessed by savage nations — territories which in their hands must forever have remained barren and unproductive, but which under civilised rule would afford homes and happiness to teeming millions. It has always been held as a doctrine of international law that when such territories were discovered, the discovering nation had paramount authority therein; at the same time it is to the credit of England that she is the one of all civilised nations which gave the fullest development to the doctrine that the Indians were not to be ruthlessly thrown back before advancing civilisation without some fair and adequate compensation. That doctrine was based, not so much on principles of abstract justice as on motives of humanity and prudence. I hold in my hand the opinion of eminent counsel, some of whom have a name in English history, by whom this doctrine is compressed into a few short sentences. It is not dated, but the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) informs me that it is about the date of 1685. It is to the following effect:—

"By the law of nations, if any people make discovery of any country of barbarians, the Prince of the people who make the discovery hath the right of soil and government of the place, and no people can plant there without the consent of the Prince, or of such persons to whom his right is devolved and conveyed; the practice of all nations has been according to this, and no people have been suffered to take up land but by the consent and license of the Government or proprietors under the Prince's title, whose people made the first discovery, and upon their submission to the laws of the place, and contribution to the public charge of the place, and the payment of such rent and other value for the soil as the proprietors for the time being require; and though it hath been and still is the usual practice of all proprietors, to give their Indians some recompense for their land, and so seem to purchase it from them, yet it is not done for want of sufficient title from the King or Prince who hath the right of discovery, but out of prudence and Christian charity, lest otherwise the Indians might have destroyed the

first planters, who are usually too few to defend themselves, or refuse all commerce and conversation with the planters."

This opinion is signed, amongst others, by William Williams, Joseph Hoit and Henry Pollexfen. The principles here recorded have hitherto been acknowledged and acted upon by all British Governments on this continent; and I may say that they became at an early date standard principles of our policy; and when the North-West Territories were acquired by this Government, these principles were part of the unwritten law of this country. It is not to my knowledge that at the date of that important transaction the future of Indians in the territory was debated at all between the purchaser and the vendor; but if it was not debated, it was not because the Indians were ignored. It was because the principle was admitted without being mentioned, that the Indians should be treated as all Indians under British rule had been treated. But if the Indians were not ignored, there was in the territory another population, the half-breeds, who were totally and completely ignored by the Government of the time. They were sprung from European hunters and the Indians, and their character partook of the character of both nations; but in point of education and experience, though vastly inferior to the whites in point of intelligence and adaptability to civilisation, they were far superior to the Indians. Amongst other advantages which they possessed over the Indians, they had a better conception of their own rights, and greater ability to proclaim and defend them. What their conception of their rights was, is well put by Mr. Tuttle in his history of Manitoba:

"The feeling of the French half-breeds may be briefly expressed as this: that they questioned the right of the Dominion Government to take possession of what they considered their country without their consent."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to set forth here, or to recall, all the different rights claimed at the time by the half-breeds. I confine myself simply to one point, that is to say, the extinguishment of the Indian title in so far as the half-breeds were concerned. They rebelled; they objected to the further progress of the Canadian Government into what they considered their country, until their rights were recognised and guaranteed; and, after the rebellion, the Government had to admit, and did admit, that the same prudent principles that applied to the Indians should apply to the Half-breeds. The Government admitted that as the original possessors of the soil they were entitled to the same compensation as the Indians, and that since they were to be deprived henceforth of the rights of the soil, they should

be treated by the Government as the Indians had been treated. Though the principle was the same, its application in the two cases could not be identical, because of the difference in the state of civilisation of the two races. The rule universally applied to the Indians has been to put them upon reserves, and there to protect and defend them against white encroachments, and to assist them by money and otherwise during their advancement from savage to civilised life. In the case of the half-breeds this rule could not be applied, for the simple reason that they were too far advanced towards civilisation to require it. They were more ignorant and less civilised than the whites, but their minds were adapted to civilisation, and the decision arrived at by the Government was to give them a grant of land. This grant of land has been the object of two different Statutes; and it may be well here to recall the terms of those Statutes, in view of the further discussion of this subject. The first was the Act of 1870, which provided as follows:—

"And whereas it is expedient, towards the extinguishment of the Indian title to the lands in the Province, to appropriate a portion of such ungranted lands, to the extent of 1,400,000 acres thereof, for the benefit of the families of the half-breed residents, it is hereby enacted that, under regulations to be from time to time made by the Governor General in Council, the Lieutenant-Governor shall select such lots or tracts in such parts of the Province as he may deem expedient, to the extent aforesaid, and divide the same among the children of the half-breed heads of families residing in the Province at the time of the said transfer to Canada."

In 1874 a similar Statute was passed, extending to the heads of families those provisions which had been previously applied to minors alone. It has often been stated, and perhaps stated with truth, that this settlement had been in some respects injudicious—that it had proved to be of scarcely any benefit to the half-breed population, as they had been almost wholly deprived of the soil by the cunning and dishonesty of white speculators. These reports, as I have said, have not been without foundation; and experience has shown that it would be more conducive to the interest of the half-breeds if some restrictions were provided in our legislation which would secure to them the advantages which it was the intention of the law to give them. But however satisfactory the settlement may have been from the philanthropic point of view, it had this effect, that it gave protection to the half-breeds of Manitoba, and secured the peace of Manitoba, which has been observed since. It does not require argument to prove that the same treatment should be extended to the half-breeds of the North-West Territories as was extended to those of Manitoba—that

the half-breeds of the North-West are entitled to the same rights as were acknowledged and granted to the half-breeds of Manitoba; and it is acknowledged as a consequence that long, long ago the claims of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories should have been settled in a manner similar to that in which the claims of the half-breeds of Manitoba were settled. It has been made a reproach against the Mackenzie Administration that during the time they were in power they had not settled that question. Sir, the Mackenzie Administration is not here on trial, and all the reproaches which can be made against them, if proved to be true, would rebound against the present Administration with tenfold increased force. If the Mackenzie Administration was at all deficient in its duty, which I do not admit, the present Government were ten times more guilty of negligence of not having, up to the year 1885, settled that question. But there was a paramount reason, it seems to me, one which must commend itself at once to the attention of the House, why this question was not settled during the Mackenzie Administration. As long as Mr. Laird was not appointed Governor, and up to the time he reached the Province, there was practically nothing in the territories to show the half-breeds there had been a change of *régime* at all; moreover, the question could not be settled unless there was in the country some administration of some kind, and until Mr. Laird had reached the territories, in the fall of 1877, there was practically nothing whatever to show there had been a change in the condition of the people, as the people were not interfered with, and remained practically as they were before. But as soon as Mr. Laird reached the territories, in the fall of 1877, he was approached by bands of half-breeds, who made to him the very natural prayer that they should be treated in the same manner absolutely as the half-breeds of Manitoba. He was met by two different kinds of applications: First, the application of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories, who represented they had absolutely the same rights as the half-breeds of Manitoba, and should receive the same treatment; and second, the application of the half-breeds who had formerly belonged to Manitoba, but had been absent at the time of the enumeration, and had not therefore participated in the grant made to the half-breeds of Manitoba. Certainly, it was manifest that as to this last class they should participate in the grant which was made to the half-breeds of Manitoba, as it was only through an accident they had been prevented participating in it; and as to the others, though they had resided, at the time of the transfer, in the

territories, the same justice should be applied to them as was applied to the half-breeds of Manitoba. This question occupied the attention of Mr. Laird and his Council in the session of the North-West Council, which took place in 1878. They passed a resolution to this effect which, though well known, can bear repetition :

"That in view, however, of the fact that grants of land or issues of scrip were made to the half-breeds of Manitoba towards the extinguishment of the Indian title to the lands of that Province, there will undoubtedly be general dissatisfaction among the half-breeds of the said territories unless they receive some like consideration."

In a further resolution the Council sets forth that it would be prepared, in any such grants, to couple them with the reservation, so as to put them out of the reach of white speculators. Those resolutions were passed in August, 1878, and were sent to the Government, but by the time they reached Ottawa there was a change of Government and the present Administration came into office, so that they came into office just as this question was ripe for settlement. In the Session of 1879 the question occupied the attention of this Parliament, and an Act was passed in which power was given the Government to satisfy any claims in connection with the extinguishment of the Indian title, preferred by half-breeds of the North-West Territories, outside the limits of Manitoba, on the 15th July, 1870, by granting land to such persons, to such extent, and terms, and conditions, as may be deemed expedient. These were the terms asked by the Government from this Parliament, and granted by this Parliament. They do not contain mention of any special mode of settlement, but the whole matter is left to the discretion of the Government. The only thing to which the attention of the Government was directed, was that they should take some means of extinguishing the Indian title in the North-West Territory, in so far as the half-breeds are concerned. Why do the terms of the Act differ so widely from those of the Act of Manitoba? Why are the terms of settlement left altogether to the discretion of the Government instead of their being made directory as they are in the Statute of Manitoba? The reason is that the Government, did not then contemplate to settle the half-breed question in the Territories in the same manner as in Manitoba, but contemplated disposing of it in some other way. By the papers which are brought down, we find that, as early as December, 1878, Colonel Dennis, who, at that time, was Deputy Minister of the Interior, had put before the Minister a memorandum in which the whole half-breed question was

stated for his consideration. In the opening sentences of the memorandum, Colonel Dennis speaks as follows :—

"He respectfully submits to the Minister that it is expedient, with as little delay as possible, to deal with the claims to consideration preferred by the half-breeds of the North-West Territories."

He then states :

"Some uneasiness is felt by the half-breed element in the Territories in consequence of no steps having yet been taken towards the recognition of the demands put forward on their behalf. It must be freely admitted they have a claim to favorable consideration; and the question is—how is that claim to be satisfied, so as to benefit the half-breeds, and, at the same time, benefit the country? Certainly the experience gained in carrying out the policy adopted in regard to the half-breeds of Manitoba—that is, absolute grants of land to the parents and children, respectively—has not been such as would justify a similar policy with regard to the half-breeds of the North-West Territories. Indeed, it is anything but probable that a proposition of that nature could be again carried in Parliament. What, then, are we to do for them? They have, as natives, as good a right to protection of the Government as the Indians, and, unfortunately, they are very little better able than are the Indians to take care of themselves.

"It is therefore evident that one or other of three courses must be pursued with respect to them :—

"1. To treat them as wards of the Government, in effect make a treaty with them, as with the Indians, and look forward to their remaining for many years in their present semi-barbarous state.

"2. To give an absolute issue of scrip, to a reasonable extent, to each individual, and then let them take their chances of living or starving in the future; or

"3. To offer them certain inducements to settle on land and learn to farm—especially raising cattle."

Then he went on and made this statement, among other very significant statements :

"He is of opinion that further measures should be adopted to cultivate and maintain relation with our Indians and half-breed populations, calculated to attach them to us, and to convince them that the Government is desirous of fulfilling its obligations to them in the utmost good faith."

And he concluded with these pregnant words :

"The undersigned respectfully requests for the whole question discussed in this memorandum, the early consideration of the Minister of the Interior, in order, if thought desirable, that a measure may be prepared, embodying such policy as may be decided upon, in good time, for the ensuing session of Parliament."

That was said in December 1878. This memorandum was sent to different persons in the North-West who were conversant with the condition of affairs of the half-breeds, with the object of having their views on the question. It was sent, amongst others, to Archbishop Taché, and I may say that all the other persons to whom the memorandum was sent, were unanimous in saying that the half-breeds were entitled to some special favor at the hands of the Government. Archbishop Taché, amongst other things, said ;

"It must be freely admitted that the half-breeds of the North-West have a claim to favorable consideration. Great uneasiness is felt by them in consequence of no steps having been taken in their behalf. A liberal policy on the part of the Government would attract to its side a moral and physical power, which the present critical relations of the various tribes of Indians towards each other, and towards the Government, would prove of the greatest value to the Dominion. On the other hand, the half-breed element, if dissatisfied, would turn a standing menace to the peace and prosperity of the Territories. There is no doubt that the state of affairs in the Territories in relation to the Indians and half-breeds is calling for the serious consideration of the Government, and measures should be adopted to cultivate and maintain relations with the half-breed population calculated to attach them to us. The result depends, in a great measure, on the way the half-breeds will be treated. Friendly disposed, they will mightily contribute to the maintenance of peace; dissatisfied, they would not only add to the difficulty, but render the establishment of the country the next thing to an impossibility. The half-breeds are a highly sensitive race; they keenly resent injury or insult, and daily complain on that point. In fact, they are daily humiliated with regard to their origin, by the way they are spoken of, not only in newspapers but also in official and semi-official documents. Everyone acknowledges the desirability for the half-breeds to settle definitely on lands to cultivate them. Here is a scheme I take the liberty to propose. I esteem the half-breed population actually in the North-West at about twelve hundred families. Let the Government make twelve reserves for them, in the very places the half-breeds will like to have them. Each reserve should be for one hundred families at least and contain an area of twelve square miles of available land—that is to say, the extent of four townships. All the half-breeds, men, women and children, residing in the North-West on the 1st January, 1879, ought to receive two non-negotiable scrips for eighty acres of land each, to be located by them in any one of the twelve above-mentioned reserves. Said lands could neither be sold, mortgaged nor taxed before they should have passed through the hands of, at least, the third generation of those who received them, or of their representatives. I say at least, because I am strongly inclined to believe that it is desirable that such lands be entirely unalienable; and such an idea cannot seem unreasonable to those who consider the advantages deriving from a similar policy with regard to real and unalienable estates of noblemen. Raise the half-breeds to the condition of landlords; you will thereby confer a real benefit on them, and we will not see a repetition of the regrettable occurrence which took place in Manitoba. The only traffic of land which I would like to see allowed would be the exchange of a full lot for another full lot between the half-breeds, even it should be in different reserves. That would be no encouragement to speculators, but great facility to the half-breeds, especially when they marry."

And he concluded in this manner, which should have commended itself at once to the consideration of the Government:

"It is desirable that the half-breed question should be settled without any further delay. The required legislation ought to be passed in the coming session of the Legislature. Immediately after, inspectors ought to be appointed, and I would particularly recommend Mr. Angus McKay as one of the inspectors."

Such were the views expressed by Archbishop Taché. It must be admitted that upon anything which affected the condition of the half-breeds no one could speak with greater

authority. The plan he proposed was not adopted by the Government. Of this I make no complaint at this time. Upon this it is not my province at this moment to offer any comment. I neither praise nor blame the Government for that now; but the fact for which the Government are blameable and are to be arraigned before the people of the country is that, while their attention was called in 1879 to this matter, for six long years they remained idle and did nothing towards the solution of this question. They asked for the views of others. What in the world did they ask them for, when, having had those views, they put them in the pigeon-holes and did nothing to solve the question upon which they asked for them? The neglect of the Government upon this question is all the more unpardonable, in view of the fact that all the parties whose views they had asked for had told them that it was expedient and necessary to give immediate attention to this matter. Colonel Dennis had begged the early attention of the Minister of the Interior and the Government to that question. Bishop Taché had told them it was of paramount importance to give satisfaction to the half-breeds, to treat them with justice and fairness, to impress them with the view that the Government were to do all they should do; and yet, in the face of all that, the Government for six long years did not act at all. It is obvious, it does not require any argument to establish that it was of paramount necessity not only that the Government should act, but that they should act at once upon this matter; and the necessity was enforced, it was made still more apparent, by the earnestness with which the statement of that question and of all other questions affecting the half-breeds was pressed upon them, not only by the half-breeds themselves, but by the North-West Council, by the settlers, by the missionaries, by the officials, by everybody almost who took an interest at all in the North-West. In the month of May, 1880, Charles McKay and sixteen others petitioned the Government upon this matter. They represented that some of them belonged to Manitoba at the time the census was taken, but that they were absent at the time of the enumeration, and they asked to be placed upon the same footing as the others, and to have scrip issued to them; they pointed out that the North-West half-breeds were entitled to the same treatment as the Manitoba half-breeds, and they asked for the early issue of a commission; they also made some other demands. In the same month Octave Majeau and others from Edmonton petitioned the Government and made the same demands. In September, 1881, Antoine Lapierre, from the Qu'Appelle district, petitioned

the Government and demanded the same treatment for the half-breeds of the North-West Territory as had been granted to the half-breeds of Manitoba. In August, 1882, John Simpson and forty-two others petitioned the Government, complaining of the treatment they had received from the Ontario and Qu'Appelle Land Company. On the 4th September, 1882, Gabriel Dumont and others from the Saskatchewan River petitioned the Government, representing that they were newly established on the lands, and asking for a survey and the issue of a commission. On the 9th November, 1883, William Bremner and thirty-two others, also from the Saskatchewan River, petitioned the Government, their chief complaint being about surveys. On the 13th January, 1882, Mr. Richardson, whose name is now well known in connection with the North-West, also gave his advice to the Government and in this manner :

" Dear Colonel DENNIS.—Having passed three years in the North-West, and during that period seen a good deal of the half-breed population, the following, induced by the remarks of the Right Hon. the Premier in my presence, last Saturday, may not be out of place, the subject of dealing with the half-breed element of the North West being, as I then gathered, intended for early discussion. These half-breeds claim and insist that as a distinct class they have a share in the Indian title to the lands outside of Manitoba, which has not been extinguished, and, as such distinct class, entitled equally with the half-breeds of Manitoba, to special consideration. That grounds exist for such contention appears by reference to the Statutes of Canada, 1870, chapter 3, section 31. Admitting these half-breeds might (as some few have, but now regret) joined in the Indian treaties, I am convinced that such a contingency is not probable, but that, if requested, they would reject the offer; besides, I do not think their joining in the Indian treaties would be in the public interest, but decidedly the opposite. How best to deal with the element, has, as you are aware, been considered, and you already hold my views on the subject. I may, however, be permitted to express the opinion, that opportunities now present themselves for removing the dissatisfaction existing among these people, and securing their goodwill towards the Government, because, 1st, their former occupation as hunters is gone; 2nd, they are, as a class, destitute. A further reason for urging, as I respectfully do, early action is that they are scattered among the Indians, and latterly subjected to the evil influences of leading spirits of the Manitoba troubles of 1870, who, during the past season, have been traversing the country, doing at least 'no good.' "

On the 6th June, 1881, Mr. Lawrence Clark, a member of the North-West Council, brought before the Council the question of the non-enumerated Manitoba half-breeds, and he did it in this language :

" The undersigned has the honor to represent, for the consideration of Your Honor, the Lieutenant Governor in Council :

" That there are resident within the North-West Territory, in various settlements, but more particularly, so far as the personal knowledge of the undersigned extends, about Edmonton, Carlton, Duck Lake, St. Laurent, Prince Albert and Qu'Appelle, a number of half-breeds who were residents in what is now a Province of Manitoba, at, and before the

15th day of July, 1870, but who, in the interval between this date and the distribution of scrip and lands especially provided in the terms of transfer, have removed from their residence, and are now living in the North-West Territory.

"That the undersigned, from such information as he has been able to collect, is quite convinced the total number of the above described class of half-breeds is not large, and that proof of their claims has long since, in the majority of cases, been taken by Mr. Ryan, before his commission lapsed, or since by the local land agent and that the proof for some time back has been in the possession of the Department of the Interior at Ottawa.

"That these half-breeds, in many instances were not aware of the sittings of the commissioners in Manitoba, being limited in point of time, and in nearly every instance, even had they been aware of such being the case, were not possessed of means to bear the expense consequent upon attendance thereat.

"That the general feeling of the community is that these half-breeds, possessing even rights with those who have already received scrip for lands in Manitoba, have not had the measure of justice meted out to them to which by the terms of surrender they were entitled.

"The undersigned considers the subject as one of considerable importance, very desirable for the peace, welfare and good government of that territory, and should be taken and adjusted by the Dominion Government with as little further delay as possible."

On the following day the same gentleman brought before the Council the question of the half-breeds resident in the territories, and he did it in this language :

"That the half-breeds have already been recognised as possessing rights in the same soil, subject to which the Dominion accepted the transfer of the territories, and while ample provision has been made for those resident in Manitoba on the 15th July, 1870, nothing, so far, has been done towards extinguishing that portion of the Indian title to lands in the territories outside of the Province of Manitoba, as originally formed by the Act of 1870.

"The undersigned further draws attention to the fact that, by law, the half-breeds are excluded from the benefits conferred upon Indians.

"The undersigned has been given to understand, several petitions from various quarters have been presented to the Government on the subject of the half-breeds, particularly referred to, but no notice was taken thereof.

"That the undersigned knows that a considerable portion of these half-breeds were and are still residents of the electoral district of Lorne, and feels, as the electoral representative of that district, his duty to bring under notice their grievance in the hope that some action may be taken at an early day towards removing what seems to me to be just cause of complaint.

"The undersigned recommends that, through your Honor in council, the attention of His Excellency be respectfully drawn to the subject and he be memorialised to direct the attention of his Ministers to the position of the half-breeds, who at the transfer of Canada were and still are residents of the North-West Territory, and have not become parties to Indian treaties, and the taking of such steps as may lead to a speedy adjustment of the grievances they labor under."

That petition was forwarded to the Government by Mr. Laird, then Lieutenant-Governor, and in an accompanying letter he specially drew attention to this subject in the following words :—

"These memorials were presented to the Council of the North-West Territories at its recent session, and as they relate to subjects exclusively

within the control of the Dominion Government and Parliament, I was requested, by a resolution of Council passed on the 10th instant, to transmit copies thereof to be laid before His Excellency the Governor General, and to express the hope that His Excellency may be pleased to draw the attention of his Ministers to the grievances complained of."

Then, Sir, this subject also attracted the attention of the council. On the 8th October, 1881, there was a meeting of the settlers of Prince Albert in which this very subject was taken into consideration, and at which the following resolution was passed:—

"Whereas the Indian title in this territory has not become extinct, and the old settlers and the half-breed population of Manitoba were granted scrip in commutation of such title, and such allowance has not been made to those resident in the territory.—Resolved, that the Right Honorable the Minister of the Interior be requested to grant such scrip to those settlers, thus placing them on an equal footing with their *confrères* in Manitoba."

Ten days later there was another meeting at the same place, and a similar resolution was passed. Then, as the subject did not receive any consideration from the Government, though their attention had been so often called to it, the North-West Council again took up the matter, and at a session of Council held in the month of October, 1883, the following resolution was passed, addressed to the Government at Ottawa:

"Your memorialists further pray that those half-breeds in the Territories who have not participated in the arrangement to extinguish the half-breed claims in Manitoba, should enjoy the same rights as accorded half-breeds in that Province."

And, Sir, as late as the month of December, 1883, Mr. Jackson, whose name is well known now in this House, and who is a member of the North-West Council, addressed a communication to the Minister of the Interior (Sir David Macpherson), in which he said:

"You will pardon the liberty I now take in addressing you privately, when I tell you that it is at the special request of a large deputation of half-breeds that I do so. They, in common with the country, have heard of the generally satisfactory settlement of the 'mile belt' and reserve question, and urge, perhaps with reason, that if their own grievances, upon which the Government have been repeatedly petitioned and memorialised, were brought personally to your notice, some immediate action would be taken. Under any circumstances there would not be very many to deal with, and the settlement of their claims need not be a troublesome one. But there are half-breeds in the Territories who have never received anything from the Government, and who, it has been admitted, are entitled to some consideration."

Besides all these representations, Father Vegreville, Father André, and several other persons in the North-West, wrote letters of remonstrance to the Government. Besides all these, Father Leduc, Mr. Maloney, Bishop Grandin and several others had interviews with the Government upon this. Besides all these, my hon. friend from Huron (Mr.

Cameron), in 1884, brought this matter to the consideration of this House. Besides all these, and notwithstanding all these, the Government, though thus pressed, harassed, and besieged, never lifted a finger towards the solution of that question. During all these years, while the Department was thus filled up with letters, petitions, resolutions and representations, the Minister always remained silent, calm, majestic, but as immovable as an Egyptian sphinx while it is covered up by the sand of the desert. Furthermore, at last, in 1884, the half-breeds, despairing that they would ever get redress of their grievances by any petition that they could send to Ottawa, by any delegation which they could send to Ottawa, by any remonstrances and representations which they could make to Ottawa, finally sent for Louis Riel. Still the Government took no notice and took no action. The Government, if they were blamed at all, were blameable then. They knew that Riel had an uncontrollable character, they knew that his presence must prove dangerous to the public peace. They were warned of his doings; they were warned by their own officers of the agitation that was then taking place, but still they never lifted a finger towards solving that question. What is the reason, Sir, of that long persistent inaction? Was it simply apathy? No; if it had been merely apathy, the unceasing torrent of complaints and remonstrance which deluged the Department of the Interior, would at last have moved them to action. It was not apathy. I say that that inaction was wilful and designed; it was because the Government had come to the conclusion that they would not give to the half-breeds of the North-West the same treatment, the same favors, the same rights and privileges which had been granted to the half-breeds of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, I arraign the Government for this, I charge this upon the Government, that though they asked advice as to the best manner of dealing with that question, though they had been told by all those whom they had consulted that these half-breeds must have the same privileges as the half-breeds of Manitoba, that such precautions should be taken as would place their grants beyond the reach of the white speculator, the Government had come to the conclusion that they would not follow the advice given to them, that they would not give the half-breeds of the North-West Territories the same privileges which had been given to the half-breeds of Manitoba. The Government had come to the conclusion that the half-breeds should not be treated as a special class, should not be treated as half-breeds, but that they would have to make their choice as to whether they should be

treated like Indians or white men. On a former occasion, speaking on this subject, I quoted the language of the Prime Minister, which made that point perfectly clear, and it can bear repetition here. On 26th March, 1885, the Prime Minister, in speaking on this question, expressed his opinion in this way :

"As a whole the half-breeds have been told that if they desire to be considered as Indians, there are most liberal reserves, that they could go with the others ; but that if they desired to be considered white men, they would get 160 acres of land, as homesteads. But they are not satisfied with that ; they want to get land scrip of equal quantity—I think upwards of 200 acres—and then yet as a matter of course, this homestead as well."

Why they wanted to get as a matter of course their homesteads as well. The half-breeds of Manitoba had been given free grants of land in which they were in possession, and besides that a lot of land had been given to every head of a family amongst them, 160 acres, and the half-breeds of the North-West claimed absolutely the same privileges as had been given to the half-breeds of Manitoba. But on 26th March last the policy of the Dominion Government was that they should not be treated as had been the half-breeds of Manitoba. They should not be treated as half-breeds ; they would have to make choice either one way or the other ; they would have to be either Indians or whites. If Indians, let them go to their reserves ; if white men let them take their homesteads. That was the policy of the Government, and it was acted upon. A commission was issued. What were the instructions given to the commission ? Were they to treat those half-breeds as the half-breeds of Manitoba had been treated ? No. The instructions to the commission were simply to give the half-breeds of the North-West a plot of land of 100 acres as a homestead and nothing more. The instructions to the commissioners were to give :

"To each half-breed head of a family resident in the North-West Territories, outside of the limits of Manitoba, previous to the 15th day of July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy, the lot or portion of land of which he is at the present time in *bona fide* and undisputed occupation, by virtue of residence upon and cultivation thereof, to the extent of 160 acres, and if the lot or portion of land of which he is in *bona fide* occupation as aforesaid should be less than 160 acres, the difference to be made up to him by an issue of scrip, redeemable in land, at the rate of one dollar per acre, and in the case of each half-breed head of a family residing in the North-West Territory previous to the 15th day of July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy, who is not at present in *bona fide* occupation of any land, scrip to be issued, redeemable in land, to the extent of one hundred and sixty dollars."

There was the policy of the Government ; and, Sir, this policy was elucidated further by the First Minister himself in a speech delivered in this House on 6th July last. There

he gave the motives for that policy. He not only gave the policy, but he gave the motives actuating the Government in adopting it. He said:

"Well, Sir, what was the Government to do? We had all our friends; we had the Archbishop; we had even Mr. Jackson, of whom the hon. gentleman has spoken, who now represents the half-breeds in the North-West Council—we had him stating that there should be no grant given to the half-breeds except on condition of five years of continuous occupation. There was a conflict of opinion. I will not trouble the House with showing that there was an infinity of opinions. An infinity of advice was offered to the Government, how best to deal with the half-breeds, and the Government had only one thing to think of—what was the best for the people, what was it best to do for them, to save them even against their own improvidence, and at the same time not to keep back the settlement of the country. This, Mr. Speaker, may account to any reasonable man for what the hon. gentleman talks of as delay. They were not suffering anything. The half-breed had his own cot. He was not cultivating the land that he had. Giving him his land and giving him more land was giving him nothing. The nomadic half-breed, who had been brought up to hunt, having had merely his shanty to repair to in the dead season, when there was no game—what advantage was it to him to give him 160 or 240 acres more? It was of no use to him whatever, but it would have been of great use to the speculators who were working on him and telling him that he was suffering. Oh! how awfully he was suffering—ruined, destroyed, starving, because he did not get 240 acres somewhere else, or the scrip for it, that he might sell it for \$50. No, Sir, the whole thing is a farce."

So you see, Mr. Speaker, here is the whole policy and the motives for that policy. Because the half-breed of Manitoba had been injudicious, the half-breed of the North-West was to get nothing; because the half-breed of Manitoba had sold his scrip for \$50, the half-breed of the North-West Territories was to get no scrip at all. That was the reason of the Government's policy—that was the cause of the policy. The Government came to this conclusion, that the half-breed of the North-West should not get the same treatment as the half-breed of Manitoba, but they did not dare to announce their policy. They wanted to carry it out, but to carry it out on the sly—to carry it out, but not before the eyes of the people of the country. They knew very well that if they were to tell the half-breeds of the North-West Territories that they would not be treated as had been the half-breeds of Manitoba, and would not get as much land as the half-breeds of that Province, this would be objected to, not only by the half-breeds, but by the white settlers. The officials, the missionaries, by all those whose advice the Government had sought. Having come to that conclusion they came to adopt the fatal policy of to-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow. They trusted that by resorting to that policy of to-morrow, by carrying out that policy, but not announcing it, by and-by something would arise and the matter would be forgotten. But the matter was not

forgotten. Those men rose in rebellion, and then immediately the Government came down on their knees. What they had refused hitherto they telegraphed in haste to their commissioner to grant at once. They telegraphed their commissioner to grant the half-breeds of the North-West Territories what had been claimed for them. Sir, the Prime Minister having spoken the language which I last quoted, went on to say :

" Now, Mr. Speaker, we, at the last moment, made concessions, and we did it for the sake of peace."

At the last moment ? Not at the last moment. Not at the eleventh hour but at the fourteenth hour, when blood had been shed, when lives had been lost, when injury had been inflicted which no power under heaven could repair, then the Government yielded to the demands of those people, but not before then. And I call the attention of Parliament to the motives which were assigned by the Government for that fatal and mistaken policy. What were the motives given ? The Government would not give the half-breeds of the North-West Territory the same privileges as had been given to the half-breeds of Manitoba. The half-breeds of Manitoba had been improvident in the management of their property, and therefore the Government would not give the half-breeds of the North-West any property at all. The half-breeds in Manitoba had sold their scrip for \$50, and therefore the Government would not give the half-breeds of the North-West any scrip whatever. The half-breeds of Manitoba had sold their lands to speculators and had been despoiled by speculators, and therefore the Government would despoil the half-breeds of the North-West of the whole of their lands. Sir, because the half-breeds of Manitoba had been injudicious in the management of their affairs, it was monstrous that the half-breeds of the North-West should not be accorded any rights, and that the Government should break faith with them. If the half-breeds of Manitoba had been injudicious in the management of their property, there was a remedy. The remedy was the one suggested by Archbishop Taché and by all those conversant with the matter. The remedy was to couple with the legislation some safeguard, whereby the grants of land might be kept to the people, and might be put beyond the reach of white speculators. But who has ever heard of such a monstrous policy as the policy which was propounded and carried out by this Government, namely, that because the half-breeds of Manitoba had been injudicious in the management of their property, the half-breeds of the North-West should have no property whatever ? It is again

worth while to consider the motives of the Government. They say the half-breeds of Manitoba disposed of their lands. And that is the reason why they gave no land to the half-breeds. Sir, is land such a scarce article with us that the Government of a sudden have become so parsimonious? Is the land of such value that the Government should of a sudden be taken with such a fit of economy? Why, Sir, did the Government in this matter of the land grant, consider like the French gentleman of whom Balzac says, that "the soil was his mistress"? It is true that the Government have without remorse or compunction given away millions of acres of land to their favorites, that they might indulge in speculation, but the grant to the half-breed is only 160 acres because he, too, forsooth, might speculate. It has been said several times that even if that grant was refused to the half-breeds even if they were entitled to it still it was a very small grievance at best, and was no reason for going into rebellion. Sir, that is not the question. I do not examine here whether this was a cause sufficient for going into rebellion or not, but I ask of this Parliament, was there any excuse for this Government acting as they acted? Was their course calculated to promote harmony and peace rather than to promote discontent and produce all the consequences of discontent? Sir, this was in effect the course of the Government; their course was not calculated to bring harmony and peace into the land, but was eminently calculated to create discontent and all those consequences which have actually taken place, and the consequences of that discontent was rebellion. It is said that this was a small grievance. Sir, this question is irrelevant. What may be of small value to you may be of great value to me; what may be of small value to the rich man in the east may be of great value to the poor man of the west, and moreover, whether it was of great value or small, did the half-breeds claim anything unfair, unjust, or unreasonable? What the half-breeds claimed was so just, so fair and so reasonable, that their claims had actually been guaranteed by a Statute of this Parliament. What the half-breeds claimed was nothing but what the Parliament of this country contemplated giving them. It is a thing of small value, they say. Sir, nothing is of small when it is granted by law. The half-breeds broke the law at last, but I charge against this Government that they themselves broke the law for six long years, when the Government failed to solve this question, when they failed to exercise the power which was vested in them by Parliament, I charge against them that it was an actual

breach of the law. But as soon as the half-breeds broke the law the Government then complied with the law. What a sad commentary it is upon their conduct that after having for long years denied what had been claimed by constitutional prayers they should at last give to violence. But the Prime Minister said that at last he yielded for the sake of peace, that he made concessions. I say, on the contrary, that the Government made no concessions whatever. What the Government gave to the half-breeds was not a concession; it was simply the rights which had been guaranteed them by Parliament, and it is manifest—it must be manifest to every one—that any settlement of that question which would not have given to the half-breeds of the North-West the same privileges that had been given to the half-breeds of Manitoba would have been no settlement whatever. As my hon. friend beside me (Mr. Blake) said last Session, it was a matter of justice. He put it in a way which was forcible, and should be recalled to the House. He said :

“Justice is the same everywhere, justice is the same whether it be on the banks of the Saskatchewan, or on the banks of the Red River; justice demands that the same treatment which has been extended to the half-breeds on the banks of the Red River shall also be extended to the half-breeds on the banks of the Saskatchewan.”

Certainly no one can take exception to that justice demanded that those people should receive the same treatment as the half-breeds of the Red River. Why was this not done? It was said that it would not be for the benefit of the half-breeds. The point may be well taken, but surely the only solution which could have reached the objection was to do as was suggested by Archbishop Taché—to enable them to legislate in such a way that the benefits given to the half-breeds should remain in their hands. It would have been quite easy to put in the law a small paragraph by which all sales of lands by half-breeds to white speculators should be null, and if that had been done it would have met the requirements of justice. I say that the Government were bound to act by the very letter of the law; and apart from any question of positive law they should have remembered those principles of humanity and prudence which are the basis of English law in this respect, as I have shown already. They should have acted in the spirit which is indicated by the expounders of the law; they should have acted in a conciliatory manner, for fear of the Indians—or, in this instance, let us say the half-breeds—should have destroyed the first planters, who are usually too few to defend themselves, or refuse all commerce and conversation with the planters. Those are the reasons

which should have induced them to act. There is something more which must have been extremely galling to these people, and that is the contempt with which all their demands were met by the Government. They petitioned time after time, and all their petitions remained unanswered. Archbishop Taché had told the Government that the half-breeds are a highly sensitive race; that they keenly resent injury and insult, and that they make daily complaints on that point. When they had thus been warned by Archbishop Taché, was it not enough to drive them into the unfortunate course which was at last adopted when they were treated in such a manner. I say that there is no race of men under heaven which values its own dignity and suffered the indignities that those people suffered, without resenting them in some manner. Sir, the conduct of the Government is absolutely indefensible. So indefensible is it that the ministerial press, at the outset of the rebellion, more than once admitted that the half-breeds had serious grievances to complain of, and I need not say that the case must be desperate indeed if any organ of the Administration could admit the possibility of wrong on the part of the Government. But the attempt of the Government has been to minimise their own wrong, by saying that in the great majority of individual cases no just demands had been presented to the Government, but that those presenting such demands were not acting *bond fide* but were speculators who having once obtained their rights in Manitoba were attempting to obtain another grant in the North-West Territories. We find the Government presented papers or suppressed papers, accordingly as the presenting or suppressing would lead to the end in view. They refused to bring down papers which were asked for and they brought down papers which were not asked for. They refused to bring down the files of the Department which would have given a consecutive and complete history of the matter, but they bring down reports prepared after the event and prepared to suit the event. There is in connection with this matter a most important report which we should have had on the Table of the House long ago. I refer to the report of the commission appointed during the month of March last year to investigate the claims of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories. This report should have been on the Table of the House upon the very opening day of the Session; and I say this to the majority of this House, that if they had not abdicated their power and right of supervision over this Government, this report would have been upon our Table at that time. Why, Sir,

here was a commission appointed to investigate a most important public matter. This commission has sat, and its report has been presented to the Government for more than six or seven months now; and yet the Government still retain the report and refuse to bring it down. At the opening of the Session I myself enquired of the Government whether it would be brought down, and the answer given to me was that I might move for it. I did move for it on the 4th of March; and now we are at the 20th April, in the eighth week of the Session, and that report has not yet been laid up on the Table. This delay is not the result of accident or of circumstances; but it is wilful and deliberate. No man in his senses will pretend that the Government have not had the time or the means, if they had so chosen, to obtain the information contained in that report. Sir, it is no wonder to me that the petitions of the half-breeds should have met with such contempt as they met with at the hands of the Government when the very mandates of this House are thus disregarded. The majority in this House can excuse and tolerate such abuses; but the majority in this House should not forget that such abuses against constitutional Government always rebound in some way or other against the people who are guilty of them. If such abuses are tolerated by an assembly of a

free people, I speak my mind when I say that this assembly is not worthy of the great duties imposed upon it.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Mr. LAURIER. I stated to the House this afternoon that on the 4th March I had moved for the Report of the Half-breed Commission, and that up to a recent date the Order of the House which was then issued had not been complied with. The motion which was then granted by the House ordered the Government to bring down all reports made by the commissioners appointed under the royal commission, all proceedings of the said commissioners, all instructions given to them, and all correspondence exchanged between them and the Government. So far this Order has not been complied with. It is true that in the report of the Minister of the Interior, subsequently laid before the House, there is a garbled report of the commission. This report upon its face is garbled; it shows that the most important and material parts have been omitted. Now, Mr. Speaker, upon a ques-

tion of this importance, it will strike everybody that it is not sufficient to have truth, but we must have the whole truth. It was not sufficient for the Government to communicate to the House only such parts of the report as suited them. It was their duty to bring the whole of it, whether it was to their advantage or their disadvantage. But while the Government chose to bring only such parts as they deem fit, some hon. members of the House on the other side have been more fortunate than we on this side generally are. On the same day on which I moved for the report to which I have just referred, the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Ross), moved for :

"Return showing the number of half-breeds of the North-West Territories who proved their claims before the commission at Fort Qu'Appelle, Touchwood Hills, Qu'Appelle Valley, Regina, Maple Creek, Calgary, Fort Macleod, Pincher Creek, Edmonton, St. Albert, Fort Saskatchewan, Victoria, Fort Pitt, Battleford, Prince Albert, Batoche, Duck Lake, Forks of Saskatchewan, Fort à la Corne, Cumberland House, Moose Jaw and Willow Branch, in North-West Territories; also at Grand Rapids in Keewatin, and Winnipeg and Griswold in Manitoba, giving in each case the number of heads of families and minors; also the number of males and females; also copies of all the petitions filed in the Department of the Interior praying that grievances be redressed, with the names of such petitioners, distinguishing those who had their claims already settled in Manitoba and those who had not; also the number of Manitoba half-breeds who proved their claims prior to the 20th of April last on the supplementary list, and those who have proved their claims since that date."

On the 24th of March, just twenty days after this Order had issued, the return asked for by the hon. member for Lisgar was brought down. It was not voluminous or bulky, but it showed that its preparation had entailed a great deal of labor. It selected ten different petitions, which had been presented by half-breeds at different periods; it went over the names of the petitioners, one by one, and classified them under three different headings—one, the half-breeds who had participated in the Manitoba grant; second, the half-breeds who were to receive scrip from the commissioners; and third, the half-breeds who had not proved their claims. This return showed on its face not only that it had entailed a good deal of labor, but that it was manifestly prepared just to suit the event. It was not a copy of existing documents; it was a careful compilation, prepared with an object. What was the object of the compilation? The object was to show that the great majority of those who had signed those petitions had participated in the grant in Manitoba, and that the claims they were now preferring were fraudulent claims. Such was the object contemplated, and such was the result as set forth in the ministerial press. On the day after this return was brought down, the *Mail* newspaper contained the following article:—

"It appears from a return presented by the Minister of the Interior that of thirty-one half-breeds of the Lake Qu'Appelle district who petitioned the Government in 1874 for land, sixteen had received scrip or land in Manitoba, six did not prove their claims, and nine received scrip certificates from the commission appointed last year.

"Of 147 residents of the Prince Albert settlement, thirty-six had obtained their scrip in Manitoba, seventy-one did not prove their claims, and forty received scrip from the commission.

"There were 276 half-breeds living in the vicinity of the Cypress Hills who petitioned, and of these 101 had obtained their scrip in Manitoba, 161 did not prove their claims, and fourteen obtained scrip from the commission.

"Of seventeen settlers at Manitoba village who petitioned, five had obtained their scrip in Manitoba, four did not prove their claims, and eight received their scrip from the commission.

"Of 115 settlers at Fort Qu'Appelle who petitioned, fifty-seven had received scrip in Manitoba, fourteen did not prove their claims and forty-four obtained scrip from the commission.

"In September, 1882, Gabriel Dumont and 45 others, mostly French half-breeds, settled on the west bank of the Saskatchewan, in the Prince Albert district, petitioned the Government, and of those 36 had obtained scrip in Manitoba and 10 did not prove their claims.

"From St. Louis de Langevin a petition was presented, signed by 32 half-breeds, and of these 24 had obtained their scrip in Manitoba and eight did not prove their claims.

"Another petition from Fort Qu'Appelle bore 44 signatures, and of these persons 30 had obtained scrip in Manitoba, three did not prove their claims, and eleven obtained scrip from the commission.

"The rising, it will be remembered, was confined to the half-breeds of St. Laurent and St. Louis de Langevin, of whom 78 had petitioned the Government for scrip under the Act of 1879, and of these no less than 60 had obtained their scrip in Manitoba, and were entitled to nothing, and could legally receive no other treatment than that accorded other settlers in the North-West."

Now, you see the innuendo of this article. It is not set down in so many words, but the inference is that the majority of those who signed the petitions had already received scrip in Manitoba, and were again applying for scrip, and thus trying to obtain an unfair advantage over the Government. This is a most foul slander. I denounce it as a slander on the half-breeds, in trying to convey the impression that they were dishonest in petitioning for rights to which they were not entitled. Unfortunately they had more grievances than one. They had the grievance, not only that they were not fairly treated with regard to the extinguishment of the Indian title, but also the greater grievance in relation to the surveys. Not one of their petitions can bear the purport the *Mail* puts upon in. Take the first statement of the *Mail*. It said that of the thirty-one half-breeds of Qu'Appelle who petitioned, sixteen had received scrip for land in Manitoba, nine had received scrip from the commission, and six had not proved their claims. You would deduct from that statement that the thirty-one half-breeds of Lake Qu'Appelle who had petitioned the Government had been asking again for scrip for the extinguishment of the Indian title, when

they had already received scrip for that purpose. Let the House refer to the petition which is to be found at page 7 of the blue book. What do they asked for? They asked to be allowed to keep the lands they were in possession of; they asked for certain rights for fishing and hunting; they asked for the participation of the Roman Catholic mission in all the rights of the half-breeds; they asked for regulations for the hunting of buffalo and for the establishment of some authority to administer the affairs of the country. There is no demand for the extinction of the Indian title, and therefore the impression the *Mail* seeks to convey is a slander on those people. Let us take the other petitions to which the *Mail* referred. There is the petition of George McKay and others, settlers and residents of Prince Albert, numbering 147. What do they ask? They ask first for surveys; next, that the surveys be made according to their present holdings, with narrow frontages; and third, that the half-breeds who have not participated in the Manitoba distributions should receive the same consideration as was granted the half-breeds in Manitoba. Let us take the fourth petition. Of these petitioners, the *Mail* says: Forty received scrip from the commission, thirty-six had received scrip in Manitoba, and seventy-one had not proved their claims. Let us take the fourth petition, that of half-breeds living in the vicinity of Cypress Mountain. The *Mail* says 101 had received scrip in Manitoba, 14 received scrip from the commission, and 161 had not proved their claims. Let us return to the petition. It is that of David Laverguere, and 277 others, from Cypress Hills; they ask for the privileges of hunting the buffalo at all seasons; they represent that the majority among them had not participated in the scrip distributed at Manitoba, and they make their demand accordingly, fairly and honestly. I turn to the next petition. The *Mail* says 17 petitioned from Manitoba village, of whom 5 had received scrip in Manitoba, 8 had received scrip from the commission, and 4 had not proved their claims. I turn to the petition. It is that of Charles McKay, and 16 others from Manitoba village; they represented that some of them, who belonged to Manitoba, were absent at the enumeration, and did not participate in the grant of scrip; they, therefore, asked that those be allowed to participate in the grant as if they had been present when the enumeration was taken; they represent also that the half-breeds, who do not belong to Manitoba, are entitled to the same treatment, and they ask the same treatment for them. Take the next petition. The *Mail* says, that of the 115 half-breeds at Qu'Appelle who petitioned, 57 had received scrip in Manitoba, 44 had

received scrip from the commission, and 14 had not proved their claims. This is the petition of Peter Lapierre, and 114 others, from Fort Qu'Appelle. What do they ask? They ask for the North-West half-breeds the same participation in scrip as was given the half-breeds in Manitoba; they ask, as to the half-breeds of the North-West Territory, that the Government will be pleased to make a survey of their present holdings similar to old settlers' claims on the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Then, as to the petition of Gabriel Dumont and forty-six others. The *Mail* says that thirty-six of them had received scrip in Manitoba and had not proved their claims. Here, again, you would suppose that Gabriel Dumont and the forty-four others settlers, who petitioned the Government in 1882 from the Prince Albert District, asked also for scrip on the ground that they were entitled to it, whereas the purport of that petition was not to ask for scrip, but to ask that the Government should be pleased to cause surveys to be made of their present holdings, and that they should have free grants of the land of which they were then in possession. The *Mail* says of another petition of half-breed settlers near Qu'Appelle, numbering forty-four, that thirty had received scrip in Manitoba, eleven from the commission, and three had not proved their claims. But this is the petition of John Simpson, and others, whose names have become unfortunately too famous in the rebellion. Did they ask for scrip, and try to obtain an unfair advantage, as the *Mail* says? No, Sir, they did not even mention that in the petition. The only things they complain of are the surveys and the patents. They represent that their lands were invaded by the Ontario and Qu'Appelle Company, and prayed for justice. That was the only grievance they set forth. It is therefore manifest that this article in the *Mail* was a most malicious article, one calculated to convey the impression that the half-breeds had really no grievances, but that the most of those who had petitioned, had received from the hands of the Government whatever they were entitled to; and that, therefore, the rebellion was not the rebellion of people who were seeking the adjustment of grievances, but of men who were trying to take unfair advantage of the Government. I regret that the whole report of the North-West Commission has not been brought down. I have been told on good authority that Mr. Street, the president of the commission, had again and again expressed his admiration of the character of the half-breeds, and again and again stated that he had never met with a more truthful people. That, in all these transactions, though some two thousand people had appeared before

him, not one had endeavored to misrepresent facts or to try to say anything which was not the truth. Under such circumstances, the bringing down of such a report, with such an object, and commented on as it has been by the press supporting the Government, is another crime for which the Government are liable. Is it not a crime committed by the Government against those people? In the same spirit which called for the preparation of the return I have now discussed, was another report prepared which was recently placed upon the Table of this House. This report was prepared by Mr. Pearce, who is, if I recollect well, inspector of mines of the North-West Territories. This report, as he says himself, was prepared at the request of the Minister of the Interior, who sent him to the theatre of the late insurrection, for the very purpose of bringing down the information which the report contains. This report is dated the 15th December; it was placed on the Table of the House on the 15th April. It is true that certain ministerial newspapers were more favored in this respect than the House, because the report was communicated to certain ministerial newspapers, and perhaps, if we have had it all, it is due to the indiscretion of one of those newspapers, which discussed the report as if it had been already brought down to the House. This report was also prepared with an object, with the object of showing that, in the locality to which the insurrection was confined, the settlers, or the great majority of them, 92 per cent., as the report says, had really no grievances against the Government. The report goes on to say that 92 per cent. of the settlers in that locality had no grievances whatever against the Government, that 92 per cent., and perhaps more of them, had received scrip in Manitoba, that 92 per cent., at least, of them had no grievances against the Government in respect of surveys or of patents. I will not discuss this report to-day at length, the question it deals with is chiefly that of surveys, and, when we come to discuss that question, it will be time to enter into that matter and to show, as I believe, it will be possible to show, how fallacious this report is in that matter. But there is in this report a general purport which may well be discussed here. The general purport which this report tends to establish is that, since in the district to which the insurrection was confined, the majority of the people had no grievances against the Government, there could not be any grievances elsewhere, and that, therefore, the insurrection was absolutely causeless. The object the report has in view is to establish that the rebellion was causeless since in the very place where the people rebelled, they had no grievances whatever. The fact that the rebellion was confined to one particu-

lar section of the country is no evidence that there were no grievances in the other parts of the country, even if there had been no grievance in the part to which the insurrection was confined. Look at the insurrection in Lower Canada in 1837, no one will dispute to-day that the Lower Canadians suffered from grievances of a more serious nature. Those grievances were not particular to one section of the country; they affected the whole population of the Province; they extended through the breadth and length of the land; and the insurrection, when it took place, did not spread itself all over the Province, all over the district where these grievances were, for the insurrection was confined to two or three localities. Out of twenty or twenty-five counties which then existed, the insurrection was confined to two or three at most. And, moreover, the very fact that there was a rebellion in the North-West is the best possible evidence that there were grievances which affected the whole of that community. You never find a rebellion anywhere unless those who rebel receive the moral sympathy of their fellow-countrymen. If there is an outbreak anywhere—and this is a daily occurrence—and if those who rise have not the moral support of their fellow-countrymen, you may have a riot, but you will not have a rebellion: You will have a rebellion only when the community is deeply affected. If only one section of it is affected, you will not have a rebellion. The report goes on further, and tries to show that Gabriel Dumont, Philippe Garneau, Baptiste Boyer, and some sixteen others who are named, of the leaders of the rebellion, had personally no grievances whatever. What is the object of this statement? The object is to show that Gabriel Dumont, Boyer and the other leaders of the rebellion did not act from any noble motive, but simply from the malice of their heart. This is a most unfair statement to make against Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders in the rebellion. There is one particular for which I have always admired the British character, it is that British men have never been chary of expressing their admiration for a brave foe. At the ceremony of Her Majesty's coronation, the one person who received the most cheers of the assembled throng was not the young Sovereign herself, popular as she was, but the French Ambassador, old Marshal Soult. As history says, wherever the crowd could get a glimpse of his face, they cheered with increased vigor. And what was the reason? It was that the British public remembered that Marshal Soult had fought their armies with undoubted courage, and had proved himself a worthy foe even of the Duke of Wellington. I am proud to say that it has been admitted that Gabriel Dumont has proved that

he has a brave heart in his bosom. His conduct in the field drew from the First Minister himself the statement that he was the hero of that rebellion. If he had no grievance of his own, it only proves not that his fellow-countrymen had no grievances, but that he had a greater heart even than we gave him credit for. It would only show that, though he had no personal grievances of his own, he took up arms to defend the rights of others, though his own rights were not imperilled. Would it be the first time in history that men have rebelled though they had no grievances of their own, that men took arms not to remedy their own grievances, but the grievances of others who were suffering? When William of Orange, for instance, with his Dutch companions, placed themselves at the head of the English rebellion, surely he had no grievances against the English Government of that day, he had no personal grievances to avenge against the Government of James. Yet does the fact of his having no grievances alter the fact that at that time the English nation had been tyrannised over by the Government which was ousted on that occasion? And, when the Marquis de Lafayette and his companions forsook the splendor of the court of Versailles to court death on the battlefield in order to aid the American insurgents, it cannot be said that they had any grievances to avenge against the British Government. But does that alter the fact that the American colonies were fighting at that time to uphold the British principle that taxation is not to go without representation? I know the difference that separates these great men from the poor and uneducated half-breeds that live in the North-West, but though the difference is great, it only shows that reason may be found in the breast of all men, without distinction of class; and if these men had no grievance whatever, it is no evidence at all that the nation had no grievances. Have we not the fact that the commission has been dealing with a class of men who had grievances? Have we not the fact that that commission have issued scrip to something like 2,000 applicants? Thereby you have evidence that a great number of half-breeds in the North-West had serious grievances against the Government. Archbishop Taché had estimated the population at 1,200 families, which would probably give a population of 6,000 souls, out of which number one-third actually had their rights acknowledged by the commission. Will any one say, in face of that fact, the people of the North-West had no grievances? Will any one say that Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders in the rebellion, even if they had not personal grievances, were not fighting for men who, at that

time, did have grievances against this Government? No doubt Gabriel Dumont and his fellow leaders, were wrong in taking up arms. Though their complaints had been ignored during so many years, they should still have persisted in their agitation, rather than take the supreme course they adopted. But if they were wrong in taking up arms, still they were excusable. The contempt with which their demands had been received, the fact that their appeals to justice had always met with a refusal, made their action at last excusable. But what excuse can be made for this Government in denying the rights of these people? What excuse can they invoke to shield themselves from the indignation of the people of Canada? What excuse can they offer for having so long refused to act when they had been urged to do so? What excuse can they bring for having so long refused to do justice, when justice simply meant the granting of a few acres of land? What excuse can they offer for having allowed the hearts of these men to swell with bitterness, when a few simple words of right would have softened them into docility? What excuse can they offer for having so long refused legitimate and constitutional demands, which at last they yielded to violence? Sir, excuse there can be none. The Government have forfeited all claim to indulgence. Of all the rights, of all the duties devolving upon the Government, the prime duty is to maintain peace and harmony in the land; and when a section of the population becomes dissatisfied it is the duty of the Government to investigate the causes thereof, and to remedy the complaint as speedily and as fairly as possible, consistent with justice, and if they fail in this, they fail in their most sacred duty. But when the dissatisfaction proceeds from the fact that the Government have ignored their own obligations, then, Sir, I say that the people of the country would be remiss in their own duty if they were to condone such an offence, for by so doing they would strike at the very roots of their own liberty. I think these principles are true, I feel them deeply, and because I feel them deeply, I beg to move:

That all the words after the word "that" be left out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:—It was the duty of the Government to proceed with diligence under the authority they obtained from Parliament in 1879, to settle the claims arising out of the Indian title of the half-breeds of the North-West Territories, and also to settle the claims of those of the Manitoba half-breeds who were temporarily absent during the enumeration, and that in this respect the Government has been guilty of neglect, delay and mismanagement, prejudicial to the peace, welfare and good government of Canada.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The hon. gentleman, in the earlier part of his speech, before dinner, dealt almost

exclusively with the fact, as he alleged, that the Government had resisted the petitions made to them for the extinguishment of the Indian title by the half-breeds of the North-West. He pressed upon the House that all these petitions had special reference to the fact that these half-breeds had the same claim as their brothers of Manitoba, and that the Government resisted the extinguishment of their Indian title by refusing to treat them as the half-breeds of Manitoba had been treated. And then, Sir, towards the close of his speech, he apparently, judging from the usual careful and logical manner in which the hon. gentleman deals with public questions, having received new information since he left the Chamber at six o'clock, came back and told us these petitions did not ask for the extinguishment of the Indian title at all, but that they were complaints of the grievances which they had, irrespective of that question altogether. Now it seems to me that the hon. gentleman should take one ground or the other. If there were petitions coming from the half-breeds of the Saskatchewan district—and with these half-breeds especially we have to deal—which complained that their Indian title had not been extinguished, and that they were entitled to concessions similar to those which the Manitoba half-breeds have received, if he is prepared to take that ground, then, Sir, I hold that he has no right, as he did at the close of his speech, to claim that these petitions did not at all ask for the extinguishment of that title, but on the contrary, dealt with other grievances, grievances common to all parts of the North-West, so far as complaints are concerned, common, in fact, to new settlements in every country that I have ever heard of. Sir, the hon. gentleman was guilty of what I must regard as great unfairness to the Department over which I have the honor, unworthily, to preside, in saying that the Government had brought down improperly, certain returns which have been laid upon the Table. He referred to one return particularly, in which was stated the number of those whose names were attached to the several petitions who had received their half-breed scrip in Manitoba. Sir, that was the question asked in this House; that was the order given by this House. An hon. member on his own responsibility asked this House to order that the Government would analyse those several petitions and give the House the result of that analysis by stating how many of the petitioners had had their Indian title extinguished in Manitoba. Are we to be told here, especially at a time when so much is being said in relation to the alleged refusal of the Government to bring down returns

and information to Parliament, that it was an offence on the part of the Department that it should have done precisely what was ordered to be done; that because the information coming to this House in response to the order does not meet the views of the hon. gentleman, therefore the Department is in the wrong in bringing that information down. Then, the hon. gentleman has referred to the report by Mr. Pearce, which I presented a few evenings ago. I regret very much that the report was not presented some time earlier, as it might have been but for delay in the printing of the schedules by the printers. I can tell the hon. gentleman, so far from the accident, as he calls it, or the indiscretion of a newspaper in publishing in advance certain information contained in that report being the cause of its being brought down, my expectation was that the report would have been brought down at least three days earlier but for the delays in the printing office in connection with the schedules attached to the report. But the hon. gentleman says that was a report prepared expressly, after the event, in order to influence the judgment of Parliament. Whether it was prepared before or after the event, all I have to say is this: It was prepared by the particular officer of the Department who has perhaps had more to do, both under the late Government and under the present Government, with matters in the Saskatchewan district than any other officer in the Department, and therefore the officer who was best qualified to obtain the information which I desired to obtain, and which, in view of all the demands made for information, this House ought to be glad to obtain as well. If that report does not suit the views of hon. gentlemen opposite, it is certainly not my fault; it is their misfortune. And perhaps the further they probe into the actual facts, however they may get them, whether by sending emissaries into the country to enquire, or in any other way, the less cause they will find for the outbreak of last spring arising out of any improper conduct or neglect on the part of the Government of the day. The hon. gentleman has confined himself in his speech largely to the one question of the half-breed claims, the one question of the extinguishment of the Indian title, and he did that notwithstanding the fact that he cited petition after petition in which he pointed out that the extinguishment of the Indian title was not a chief cause of complaint in those petitions. I propose to deal, if the House will permit me, with the whole question of the grievances of those people in the North-West Territories and to point out, as I think I shall be able to point out, that while in the very nature of

things there may have been, and undoubtedly were, some grounds of complaint in the sense in which every settler who goes into a new country, and especially every half-breed, every old settler who finds himself deprived of his usual means of livelihood by the chase, will be almost certain to feel, that so far as the Department was concerned, and so far as regards the treatment of questions connected with the half-breeds, that treatment was one of which no reasonable people could possibly complain, and in relation to which I feel quite satisfied the people of the country will declare the Government are innocent of the charge which has been made against them by hon. gentlemen opposite. This question of the half-breed claims was not altogether a new question. Hon. gentlemen opposite when they sat on this side of the House had to deal with the question. And if I refer to some of their proceedings in connection with it, I desire to say at the very outset that I do not do it for the purpose of justifying or even palliating any neglect of which the Government of the day may have been guilty, but simply for the purpose of showing that the difficulties connected with the subject in the North-West Territories were such as to cause complaint when hon. gentlemen opposite were on this side of the House, and they were such, moreover, as met at their hands certainly not more prompt treatment than has been accorded to them by the hon. gentlemen who now occupy the Treasury benches. In the first place, we know well from what has occurred that the question of the recent troubles in the North-West, which have given rise to these questions in Parliament, was not after all a new question; that Louis Riel did not for the first time last year attempt to raise trouble in connection with the North-West. We know from the statement of Crowfoot given to the *Mail* correspondent, who went through that country during last spring, that long ago, some years ago, Riel attempted to raise the Indians in revolt because, as he declared, the Government had not been treating him properly. And we know after that from a statement made by Mr. Devoy, in an interview with a correspondent of the *New York Sun*, if I mistake not, Riel attempted not only to rouse the Indians into revolt, but also to raise a feeling among the Fenians of the United States with a view, if possible, of enlisting them in his efforts to reconquer the North-West Territories. In that interview Mr. Devoy states that Riel described the frauds and trickery of the land sharks. Recollect this description was given in 1878, certainly not at a time when this Government was in any way responsible for what was going on. The interview reads:

"He described the fraud and trickery of the land sharks, who were protected in their nefarious practices by high officials of the Dominion Government, who were in league with them and profited by their thefts of land belonging to the Metis. The whole administration and system of land management in the North-West he described as rotten to the core. The wrongs of the Metis were intensified by the bitter race hatred of the men who plundered them. Deep-rooted disaffection, he claimed, existed among the whole half-breed population, both in Manitoba and the North-West Territory, and was sustained by strong sympathy on the part of the whole French Canadian population."

And so on with a number of other statements made by Louis Riel at that time to Mr. Devoy, all pointing to the fact that then, in 1878, when this Government was in no way responsible for what had occurred, Riel complained, just as he complained afterwards, of the conduct of the Government in connection with the administration of affairs in the North-West Territories. Now, was there any ground for those complaints at that time? It is well known that petitions and letters were sent to the Government then praying for the settlement of the land claims and for the extinguishment of the Indian title. Mr. Ryan and Mr. Machar had been appointed to settle matters in Manitoba, which would have been settled long before but for the interference of hon. gentlemen opposite with the steps taken by their predecessors, before they went out of office, with a view to the settlement of those land claims. They had the opportunity of knowing when they came in that these matters were then exciting some interest in the North-West, because in the report of a public meeting, held in 1873, there appears a petition which was transmitted to the Government by Lieutenant-Governor Morris, and in that petition among the claims made was this:

"We also ask of you our Lieutenant-Governor, give us lands in compensation of our rights to the lands of the country as Metis."

That was in 1873, and yet until 1876 not one single step was taken by the hon. gentlemen for the removal of those difficulties and the granting of those claims to those people as half-breeds. It was on the 19th of June, 1876, that the Government took its first action, and at that time they asked Mr. Matthew Ryan, then a stipendiary magistrate, to deal with the question. On the 23rd of October, of the same year, four months afterwards, Mr. Donald Codd, Dominion lands agent, telegraphed to Ottawa as follows:—

"Ryan never received instructions referred to in your letter 12th July. Important that he should be authorised to act by telegram."

So that after, in June of that year, pretending to take that question up, it was not until they were urged to it by their agent in Winnipeg, four months afterwards, that they took the first serious step in connection with it. Two days after-

wards Mr. Donald Codd sent a telegram to Ottawa as follows:—

"Ryan anxious to know on what authority he acts. He thinks old commission has expired. Is it intended to keep result of half-breed allotment strictly confidential?"

The answer to that statement was as follows:—

"To MATTHEW RYAN.

"The acting Minister requests you, if willing to take such additional duty, to continue to take evidence of claimants to half-breed lands or to scrip who may come before you in North-West Territories. On reply, forms will be sent."

Now, Sir, Mr. Ryan appears to have accepted the commission entrusted to him. He entered on his duties, but on the 3rd of March, 1877, being then engaged in the performance of his duties as stipendiary magistrate and those supplementary duties connected with the half-breed claims with which he was charged, he wrote rather a remarkable letter, the full text of which I shall read to the House:

"SWAN RIVER, 3rd March, 1877.

"DEAR SIR,—In the matter of my continuing the half-breed lands investigation, as the only official communication I hold on the subject is a telegram authorising me to take the evidence of claimants who may come before me in the North-West Territory, would you kindly inform me, as soon as possible, whether it was the intention of the Department that I should put myself in communication with half-breed claimants by visiting the localities in which they reside, or that I should act in their behalf as they might casually come before me in the course of the discharge of my magisterial duties? If the latter were the intention, I fear that no early practical good can be effected. The greater number of the half-breeds of the different settlements can only be met at certain periods, before their departure to hunt, and after their return, and I am not aware at present at what period or periods I am likely to be engaged as a magistrate at these respective places. My apprehension is, that to trust to the coincidence of our thus meeting would be to defer the investigations indefinitely, and ultimately to cause many of the half-breeds and others in the Territory the loss of the benefits intended for them by law. Would it not be well, therefore, for me to make special endeavors in their behalf during the coming seasons of spring and autumn? I can conveniently go to Lac Qu'Appelle in May, where, as I am advised by Mr. McLean, agent of the Hudson Bay Company, and by the Catholic curé, the bulk of the half-breeds can be met between the middle of that month and the 10th or 15th of the next. And later I may be able to visit the Scotch settlement of Prince Albert, and the French of St. Laurent, and so on. I am not informed, either, as to the matter of expenses, but presume they are to be paid under authority of the Department of the Interior. Would you please instruct me on this head, and generally on the subject of the latter, at your earliest convenience, and believe me to be.

"Very truly yours,

"MATTHEW RYAN.

"D. Codd, Esq., Winnipeg."

That letter was dated on the 3rd of March, 1877, and in a postscript he says:

"P.S.—I would require no secretary or assistant, and would otherwise be careful of cost.—M. R."

Now, Sir, there was a pleading letter from the commissioner appointed to enquire into the half-breed claims; there was the deliberate statement on his part with a knowledge of the country, with a knowledge of the habits of the people, with a knowledge of the localities where they might be found most readily, that unless he was permitted to go to particular localities and meet them and give them notice of his being there, the work with which he was entrusted must result in no advantage to the half-breeds, and consequently must result disastrously. And yet, Sir, what was the answer given to that letter by the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills), who at that time was Minister of the Interior. Here it is, written in his own handwriting across Mr. Codd's letter enclosing that of Mr. Ryan:

"It is not necessary to look up parties who have claims. If they care for their interests they will themselves come forward and establish their claims.—D. M."

That, Sir, was the spirit in which the hon. gentleman, who, with his friends, is so solicitous about those half-breeds, who complained that they had not been treated as they should have been treated—that was the spirit in which he dealt with the supplicating letter of his own commissioner, asking that he might be permitted to visit the half-breeds and deal with them as he there found them. But that is not all. Mr. Ryan appears to have been most solicitous in the matter, and he did, at his own expense as it turned out, go to Lake Qu'Appelle with a view of meeting some of the half-breeds there, and when he sent in his bill for \$75 to pay his expenses the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills), then Minister of the Interior, refused to pay these expenses, and they were only paid after the present Government came in and the present First Minister was Minister of the Interior. That is the way in which hon. gentlemen dealt with those questions. The letter, as I have told you, was submitted to the Minister. Very little appears to have been done in connection with the matter until the 24th of June, 1878, when Mr. David Laird, then Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, a gentleman who was, I believe, not in the best relations possible with the then Minister of the Interior, telegraphed as follows:—

"Observe Mr. Ryan's authority, investigate half-breed claims under order 14th June, 1876, lapsed. Recommend time be extended one year. He is now here. Applicants waiting answer."

On the 28th June, 1878, Mr. Ryan himself telegraphed from Battleford:

"Half-breeds pressing me. Will time of investigation be extended?"

And the answer was as follows:—

"Minister has subject under consideration, and will probably authorize Mr. Duck, who has been appointed Dominion lands agent for Saskatchewan, to investigate such claims."

And that, Sir, was about the last thing the hon. gentleman did in connection with the half-breed claims of the North-West. He appointed a commissioner, and when the commissioner told him what was absolutely necessary to be done, he refused to permit that to be done, and when the commissioner, acting on his own sense of what was right, did it, and incurred a little expense in doing it, he refused to pay that expense; and then, when the Lieutenant-Governor tells him first, and then the commissioner, that the half-breeds were there waiting, but that the authority of the commissioner had lapsed, the answer sent was that the matter was under the consideration of the Government, and that probably Mr. Duck, the newly appointed agent at Prince Albert, would be appointed to investigate those claims. And yet, with that record, these hon. gentlemen move resolutions such as that which has been moved to-day, and ask the condemnation of the Government by Parliament and the country, on the ground that they did not deal fairly, fully, quickly with these half-breed claims in the North-West. During that time it is well known that the importance of this matter was pressed upon the Government by the Hon. Mr. Laird. In addition, there were several petitions from persons in the North-West; and Mr. Dennis, referring to those petitions, and dealing with the question, wrote as follows:—

"The question raised by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor as to the manner in which the claims of settlers may be adjusted, who located upon lands in the North-West Territories previous to the transfer, involving, as it does, a question of policy, is for the Minister to consider."

So that it appears that up to that time, although a commissioner had been appointed, the Minister had arrived at no conclusion as to the manner in which he should deal with those claims:

"The undersigned would, however, in reference thereto, venture to express the opinion that land so settled on, without the same may possess exceptional value owing to its situation, and had been taken up with a view to speculation, if the claimant shall have been constantly residing upon and cultivating it to a reasonable extent, should be granted free to the occupant. To give effect to such a policy, however, legislation would be required."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was in March, 1877, and it was a question of simply giving to those people the land upon which they were settled—doing for them, in fact, the very thing the offering to do which afterwards, by this Government, is denounced by the hon. member who has moved

this resolution, as a failure of justice to those people—simply the granting of the lands on which they were located, and he is told that legislation will be necessary in order to enable him to do it. And yet, Sir, although another Session of Parliament came and passed afterwards, during which he had the opportunity of getting that legislation, the Session opened and closed without any legislation being attempted, the case of the half-breeds being left precisely as it was, in spite of the recommendation of Mr. Dennis, his own deputy. That, Sir, I think, may fairly illustrate the manner in which the hon. gentleman dealt with those claims. He had claims of a similar kind to deal with in Manitoba. He had to deal with what were usually called the stake claims; and I find that when a schedule was submitted to him of names for his decision as to whether they should have their land or not, nine-tenths of them were bracketed, and the words were written after them, "No —D. M.," to the effect that these people had no claims and should not receive any consideration whatever. What was the condition in which those people were at that time? I have here a letter which, I think, will show the spirit in which these hon. gentlemen dealt with affairs in the North-West. The letter is dated Winnipeg, 29th September, 1877. It is signed by the Rev. Father Lacombe, whose interest in matters in the North-West is well known. It is not addressed to the hon. gentleman for reasons which I suppose the postscript of the letter will sufficiently explain. It is addressed to a gentleman at that time a colleague of the hon. gentleman, the Hon. Mr. Pelletier, then Minister of Agriculture, who had a seat in the other House. The letter was to this effect:

"VERY DEAR SIR,—As you desired me, during your visit to Manitoba, to acquaint you privately with such information as might aid you in the administration of our Province, I now frankly and confidently communicate the annexed newspaper articles.

"I take the liberty of drawing your attention to those articles, as well as to the remarks which I shall add.

"It must be understood that I am far from approving the violent and unseemly language of the English article. It appears to me that we may protest without being insulting.

"I regret to say that many of the sentiments expressed in those articles are participated in by a great many persons in our Province. Resolutions, coming from Ottawa, threaten to give a fatal blow to our immigration. The Government ask \$5 per acre for land on the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. It is too much even for speculation, as speculators sell the same lands for \$2 per acre. But above all it is a great deal too much when we consider that those lands are occupied by immigrants who have expended all they had to instal themselves on those lands. If the Government persevere in this determination they will ruin many who accepted the invitation they made them to settle in Manitoba.

"I understand, moreover, that the question of 'stake-claims (Stake-claims) is to be regulated in a manner still more unjust; they wish to draw lots in favor of the Metis children, for lands owned at Rat River and elsewhere anterior to the transfer. For more than seven years those lands, recognised among the population as the property of those who took them, were frequently sold and exchanged. And to-day, on account of these exchanges, there are at Rat River, in the parish of St. Pierre, more than fifty resident families. These families established themselves in good faith, and behold it is now thought to dispossess the greater part of them, of whom many are immigrants, who arrived in spring, bought the land and made outlay for the purpose of establishing themselves. The pretext invoked is, that on certain farms there is little or no cultivation—a pretext which to me seems ill-founded, because those lands were at any rate possessed by those who claim them, before the reserves for Metis children were localised in this place or vicinity. If the lands were possessed then, they are still the property of those who claim them, and consequently an injustice is done in dispossessing them of them. If, on the other hand, these lands were not owned at the time of the localisation of the reserves, how can it be pretended that their cultivation would have ensured their possession? The Government has not yet said anything officially, and secretly they direct the lottery of these lands, so that the odium of dispossessing the occupants may fall on the children of the Metis, to whom these lands shall thus come.

"Evidently the Government are ill-informed, otherwise they would not, for the sake of a few hundred acres of land, consent to draw upon themselves the odium these resolutions would create, to paralyse immigration, and to throw another brand of discord among the population.

"Such are the remarks, which in true friendship, I have thought it my duty to submit for your consideration.

"I remain with much respect, your very humble and obedient servant,
(Signed). ALB. LACOMBE, Ptre., O.M.I."

Then here is a personal postscript :

"Permit me to avail myself of this opportunity to offer you, with all my heart, my best wishes for the New Year."

Here is a second postscript, which is an important one :

"I forgot to tell you that I advised Mgr. Taché to write to the Government. Although he regretted all these misunderstandings, he replied that he would not venture to write to Ottawa, inasmuch as he had never received anything but refusals, and he feared to compromise the case, rather than benefit it, by writing on the subject."

That, Sir, was the opinion of His Grace the Archbishop of the manner in which hon. gentlemen opposite treated questions concerning the North-West in which he felt a deep interest, when he ventured to send either petitions or letters to them with regard to those questions. Now, Sir, it is well known that when the change of Government took place, although hon. gentlemen opposite had done nothing to provide by legislation for the settlement of these half-breed claims, the Conservative Government, in its first Session, that of 1879, passed an Act in which they took power to settle these claims. That Act has been referred to by the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) on two or three occasions. He has referred to it to-night, and intimated that the first thing done under it was the appoint-

ment of the commission last spring. I do not desire, for a single moment, to charge the hon. gentleman with mis-stating, because I believe him to be incapable of wilfully mis-stating; but I charge him with not having as carefully studied the question as its importance deserves, and as he certainly ought to have studied it. On the 1st June, 1883, an Order in Council was passed, based on a memorandum of the Minister of the Interior, of the 31st May, 1883, separating the offices of Surveyor General and Deputy Head of the Department, creating Mr. Lindsay Russell Surveyor General, with the rank of Deputy Head, and in this memorandum is the following clause:

"The duties of the Surveyor General will necessarily require that he shall spend a considerable part of each season in the North-West, so that he may have the opportunity of directing the operations of the staff in the field; in connection with and in addition to which the opportunity would be afforded him of investigating and finally settling upon the spot, a large class of long-standing and somewhat complicated claims to land, arising at various points in the Territories. Invested as he would be with the rank and authority of a Deputy Head, and bringing to bear on the cases submitted for his adjudication the experience he has acquired in the administration of Dominion lands, his decisions would naturally command the respect and acquiescence of those whom they most directly affect, as well as the confidence of the general public."

Then, by an Order in Council of 7th July, 1883, arrangements were made for dealing with the claims of actual settlers in the Prince Albert and Edmonton districts to obtain titles to the lands they occupied, and it was the intention of Mr. Lindsay Russell to have left at once for the North-West where he would have been able to deal with the claims question on the spot and settle them on terms reasonable both to the country and the half-breeds and the other settlers chiefly interested. But, as we all know, an accident befell Mr. Russell. He was detained in his room for a long time, and was unable to go to the North-West, as he had intended to do and as the Government desired. The case was not one of such urgency as to require that a substitute, that a less efficient man, should be sent in his place, and so long as there was any hope that Mr. Russell would be able to undertake the important work, the Government, having regard to his great experience and to his familiarity with the English, French and Cree languages, wisely deferred the appointment of any one else until they had to give up the hope of his being able to go at all. Now, there were several classes of claims presented to the Government in relation to the North-West. There were of course a number of other subjects referred to in the petitions. We have heard them read to-night. There was permission asked to hunt the buffalo, but I am not aware that anyone ever prevented a half-breed or Indian from hunting the buffalo;

the misfortune was, there were no buffalo to hunt. There was also the question of fishing rights, but I am not aware—although, I am bound to say, I think it would have been wise if it were otherwise—that anyone ever prevented a half-breed, an Indian, or a settler from fishing as he pleased or where he pleased, at his own sweet will. I think the time, however, is rapidly coming when fishery regulations will have to be adopted in the North-West to protect our valuable fisheries there. But, so far as the principal claims are concerned, they may be reduced to two great classes: First, the extinguishment of the Indian title; and, second, the giving of patents for the lands on which the people were settled. As to the extinguishment of the Indian title, it is well to remember that the rebellion occurred on the Saskatchewan, that there was no rebellion anywhere else, and that, therefore, in so far as the rebellion may have been said to have been caused by the non-extinguishment of the Indian title, we have the right to enquire as to whether the persons who petitioned from the Saskatchewan districts were entitled to have any Indian title extinguished, or whether that particular grievance had not in their case been already removed. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Laurier) has declared that the suggestion that these people had had their Indian title extinguished in the North-West, is an insult to them. He has charged the *Toronto Mail* with having been guilty of the grossest insult towards the half breeds, by implying that they went into the rebellion for causes which were in fact no causes at all, because the particular grievance in question in their case, had been settled. I have yet to learn that it is an insult to state facts with regard to any people. The particular facts in regard to this case are that the people of the South Saskatchewan, where the troubles arose, had, in the overwhelming majority of cases, their Indian title already extinguished before the rebellion; and that, as to the men engaged as councillors of Louis Riel, a large proportion of them had had their titles extinguished in Manitoba, and, therefore, so far as the extinguishment of the Indian title was concerned, there was no ground whatever for the rebellion which took place on the Saskatchewan, and it took place at that point alone. The place where, perhaps, there had been fewer half-breeds with the Indian title extinguished than in almost any other part of the North-West Territories, was in the Edmonton district at St. Albert; yet, we know that when the rebellion broke out at the Saskatchewan, the young half-breeds of St. Albert enlisted on the side of the Government, and were prepared to do battle for their Queen and their country like the other settlers and volun-

teers. They did not pretend, that although the Indian title had not been extinguished in their case, they had any ground to rebel, but, on the contrary, recognising that their best interest was to be found in the preservation of the peace and in the prosperity of the country, they enlisted on behalf of their Queen and their country, and aided in preventing the success of the rebellion. So far as the half-breeds in the Saskatchewan district were concerned, the Indian title had in fact been extinguished. Now, Sir, as to this question generally, what are the facts? There is no doubt whatever there were great differences of opinion in the North-West as to the best means of dealing with the Indian title. The hon. gentleman has read from the proceedings of the North-West Council, their proposed method of dealing with this matter. I will repeat the resolution of the council, but first let me look at the recommendation of Archbishop Taché than whom, as the hon. gentleman very properly said, no one is in a position to speak with more authority in relation to the North-West matters. Now, his Grace the Archbishop recommended this:

"I estimate the half-breed population actually in the North-West to number about 1,200 families."

The House will excuse my repeating the quotation made by the hon. gentleman:

"Well, let the Government make twelve reserves for them in the very places the half-breeds themselves would like to have them.

"Each reserve should be for 100 families at least, and contain an area of 12 square miles of available land—that is to say, the extent of four townships. All the half-breeds, men, women and children, residing in North-West on the 1st January, 1879, ought to receive two non-negotiable scrips for 80 acres of land each; to be located by them in any one of the twelve above-mentioned reserves."

You will notice that the Archbishop's suggestion is that they should have 160 acres of land, precisely the quantity of land which the hon. gentleman says was inferior to that which was given in Manitoba, where the children of half-breeds had 240 acres, and for proposing which he condemned the Government—

"Said lands could neither be sold, mortgaged nor taxed before they should have passed through the hands of at least the third generation of these who received them, or of their representatives. I say, at least, because I am strongly inclined to believe that it is desirable that such land be entirely unalienable; and such idea cannot seem unreasonable to those who consider the advantages deriving from a similar policy with regard to real and inalienable estates of noblemen. Raise the half-breeds to the condition of landlords; you will thereby confer a real benefit on them and we will not see a repetition of the regrettable occurrence which took place in Manitoba."

That was the suggestion of His Grace the Archbishop. Looking at it as a practical man, and not pretending for a moment

to have anything like the authority in dealing with the affairs of the half-breeds that His Grace has, I think the people of this country, as a whole, would not have favored the setting apart of twelve reserves, which were to be absolutely inalienable, and were not to be subject to taxation, and to establish, in fact, a system of landlordism in the North-West. But, leaving that aside, what had we from the North-West Council? This is a body representing the people of the North-West, a representative body which is supposed to speak for the people of the North-West, and the very first resolution they presented was a condemnation of the policy of His Grace. In their first resolution they declare:

"That it would be injudicious to set apart reserves of land for the half-breeds of the North-West Territory, or give them negotiable scrip."

So you will see that the first people to object to the policy suggested by His Grace were the representatives of the people of the North-West themselves, in council assembled, in the very petition for not obeying which, for not accepting which, for not dealing in accordance with which, this Government has been attacked both in Parliament and in the country. What did they propose? Here was their proposition:

"That in view, however, of the fact that grants of land or issues of scrip were made to the half-breeds of Manitoba towards the extinguishment of the Indian title to the lands of that Province, there will undoubtedly be general dissatisfaction among the half-breeds of the said Territories unless they receive some like consideration. That this consideration would most tend to the advantage of the half-breeds were it given in the form of a non-transferable location ticket for, say 160 acres to each half-breed head of a family and each half-breed child of parents resident in the said Territories at the time of the transfer thereof to Canada, the ticket to be issued immediately to any half-breed eighteen years of age or over, on furnishing evidence of claim, and to every child on arriving at that age, and furnishing the necessary evidence."

So you will see that the proposal there was again 160 acres, to be given to the head of a family, and to the child on arriving at the age of eighteen years:

"That each half-breed holding such a location ticket should be allowed to locate it upon any unoccupied Dominion lands, but the title of the land so entered should remain in the Crown for ten years; and if, at the expiration of three years after such entry, the half-breed locatee has made no improvement on the land, his claim thereto shall be subject to forfeiture."

That was the proposal of the North-West Council, a proposal which would have placed every half-breed in an interior position to any ordinary settler going into the North-West. They were to have 160 acres each; any settler can go into the North-West and get 160 acres. They were to make improvements for three years or were to be deprived of the

land; any settler can, on making improvements on his land for three years, get his patent; but they were not to get their patent; the land was to be inalienable for seven years longer, and they were to continue to reside upon it during that time. So that the proposal of the North-West Council was one that would place every half-breed in a position inferior to that of a white settler going in there, and would have left him without any claim, not even the right which is given under the law to any man who chooses to take up a homestead in the North-West. Would anyone pretend to say that the Government would have met the views of the half-breeds if they had accepted that proposition? When the time came to settle these claims with the half-breeds, when they had the opportunity of taking 240 acres for each child of a half-breed born in the Territories before 1870, how many of them took the land? Why, an infinitesimally small number took the land, the great majority taking scrip instead. The papers before the House tell us that a meeting was held at Fort Qu'Appelle at which were adopted resolutions in which the half-breeds declared that they would not take scrip, but would insist upon having land. That was telegraphed down to Ottawa by Mr. Street. Mr. Street was at once instructed to comply with the request of the half-breeds, and give them their settlement in the manner most conducive to their wishes. Yet, when the time came to settle the matter, when the opportunity was given them, I think I am right in saying that but two took land out of all those who put in claims, all the rest taking the half-breed scrip instead. So we have the recommendation of His Grace Archbishop Taché, we have the recommendation of the North-West Council, both of which recommended that land alone should be given, both of which recommended that the half-breeds should remain upon that land on penalty of forfeiture, both of which recommended that land should be inalienable for a certain period, the one for three generations, and the other for ten years; and yet, when the half-breeds came to deal with the matter in their own way, they all took simply scrip, which I am sorry to say most of them sold for a very small sum indeed. They took scrip and thus showed that they did not agree with the suggestion made by those who were perhaps best fitted to advise them, but they took the course which the Government permitted them to take as a last resort rather than allow them to continue to feel that they had any grievances at all. I made this statement in the west a short time ago, and Mr. Jackson, to whom reference has been made, who is a personal friend of my own, with whom I have friendly corres-

pondence all the time, delivered a speech in Fort Qu'Appelle in which he undertook to answer this part of the statement which I made in a speech delivered in Ontario. He said:

"Now, gentlemen, with regard to the question of the issue of scrip or land, just let me say this—and my friend, Mr. Fisher, who was there, will bear me out in it—that, at the first sitting of the commission, I myself and other gentlemen who were presumed to have influence with the half-breeds, urged upon them the almost absolute necessity of taking land. On the first day, about 70 per cent. agreed to take land instead of scrip. In the meantime, and about this time, the fight at Duck Lake had taken place. The Indians felt there that they had whipped the troops. Riel despatched runners and agents all over the country. One was despatched to Fort Qu'Appelle to circulate reports of their success amongst the half-breeds. About this time the rumor reached here from half-breed sources that Riel was to prove victorious, that the half-breeds had better not take land; that they should take scrip, buy what they could, and the land would ultimately belong to them. That is what induced them to take land. (Mr. Fisher. That is so.) These are facts."

Now, Sir, what does that mean? It means that what these people were rebelling for was not the extinguishment of their Indian title but to obtain possession of the country; it was not the permission to hunt for buffalo, nor to fish, but it was simply for the purpose of getting possession of the whole country. As soon as ever, according to the testimony of Mr. Jackson their own friend, there was a prospect of getting the whole country, then they took the scrip. They said: We will take this from the Government in the meantime, it is Government money, and we will have the whole land in the North-West afterwards. Now I should be sorry, for one, to believe so ill of the half-breeds of the Qu'Appelle district, but the testimony comes from two of their friends, from Mr. Jackson, their representative in the North-West Council, and from Mr. Fisher, who was one of their most sincere admirers and trusted leaders, and we cannot do otherwise than to assume that these gentlemen knew what they were talking about when they made such a serious charge against the half-breeds as that they took the scrip because they thought they would get all the land afterwards, and not in any sense in extinguishment of their Indian titles. There were, let me say, other grievances, other complaints, made by the half-breeds. Reference has been made to the letter of Bishop Grandin, and to letters and interviews by father Leduc and Mr. Maloney. Well, Sir, so far as Bishop Grandin is concerned, I am inclined to think that the most important petition presented by him was presented to the late Government, and that as to the principal parts of it, it was dealt with by the late Government. Bishop Grandin said:

"1st. Before all, I ask some encouragement for the settlers. The Catholic missionaries have done almost impossible things in this direc-

tion. They have at different places three mills. For the third time we have tried to erect one in the colony of St. Albert—behold more than £900 stg. which we have sacrificed for it; and we are still uncertain whether we shall succeed. That the Government may, on their part, deign to do something to encourage agriculture.

"2nd. Aid for a hospital—at least to construct it, and put it in a condition to receive the sick.

"3rd. Aid for schools. The Government makes large outlay for education in all Canada. Is our North-West to be alone withheld assistance? It cannot be said that we required help less than other parts of the country.

"4th. Aid for our orphan asylums, that we may increase these establishments, so as to be able to take in a greater number of little savages.

"5th. Concession of land for each orphan asylum or model farm.

"6th. Reserve of land for the children thus brought up, and aid to help them on to a little farm once they are married.

"7th. And lastly, that the reserves to be made over to the Indians be of arable land, and situated near fishing lakes."

Now, Sir, these claims were dealt with as far back as 1875, in a letter addressed by Lieutenant-Governor Laird to His Lordship, under instructions, of course, from the Government here. This is what he says:

"The Superintendent General cannot but congratulate Your Lordship upon the efforts made by the mission, especially by the establishment of mills to enable the settlers to utilise the grain raised in your diocese."

Well, Sir, there was some taffy in that, but there was not much substance.

"The Superintendent General wishes to remind you that this is a subject which will properly come within the province of the Local Government soon to be inaugurated in the North-West. He thinks, however, that it is obvious that the measures now being taken by the Dominion

Government to carry a railroad and telegraph line through the Territories must have the effect of opening up the country and of facilitating transfer through it, and in this way cannot fail to give an impetus to the agricultural interest of the Territory."

Well, Sir, the hope held out to Bishop Grandin was that this Pacific Railway, built on the line which hon. gentlemen opposite say it should have been built on, gradually, as settlement went on, some day or other would reach them, and that they must keep their courage up until that event occurred, when probably they would have the advantage of the transportation that line could afford them. He goes on:

"The second, third and fourth heads referred to by you, are all matters which come especially within the province of the Local Legislature.

There was not much encouragement in that.

"With regard to the third head, I may remark that the Dominion Lands Act makes provision by a liberal land grant to aid general educational purposes in the Territories, and so far as the Indians are concerned, the Dominion Government will, no doubt, be prepared, when the Territory is surrendered, to make the same provisions there as elsewhere by treaty for Indian schools. In the meantime, I am directed by the Minister to transmit to Your Lordship an official cheque for the sum of \$300 in aid of the school at St. Albert, authorised by Order in Council

of the 22nd October, 1873. As is assumed from Your Lordship's report, that the average attendance of Indian children at this school is not less than the number required by the Order in Council, viz., twenty-five.

So that \$300 seems to have been the whole extent of the answer given to these several propositions of Bishop Grandin :

"Any one of the other schools which Your Lordship may think proper to select will be entitled to a similar one for the current year, provided, of course, the average attendance of Indian children throughout the year is not less than twenty-five.

"As to the fifth head, namely, concessions of lands for orphan asylums and model farms, the Superintendent General is not prepared at present to make any definite pledge on behalf of the Government. On this point, the Superintendent General will be able to speak more definitely after a treaty has been made, and when the question of the extent of land asked for, for the purposes above mentioned, is more accurately known.

"The sixth head refers to large question of public policy, on what it would be manifestly too premature at present to pronounce an opinion. The settlers of the North-West have good grounds for believing that the Dominion Government will deal liberally with them. There is a sufficiency of land in the Territory for all of them and their children, and it is earnestly to be hoped that they will cultivate as much of it as possible, and secure for themselves comfortable homes in the country to which they belong.

"As regards the seventh head, namely, the reserves for the Indians. This matter has hitherto been fully provided for, and all treaties made with the Indians, by which assistance in money and agricultural implements has always been secured to them, and there can be no reason to doubt that these matters will be dealt with in a similar spirit of liberality in future treaties.

"The reservation secured to the Indians will, no doubt, have a fair proportion of arable land, and will include, when it is practicable, any fishing lakes which the Indians may desire to avail themselves of."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was the answer to the petition of Bishop Grandin, and I will ask hon. gentlemen opposite whether it gave much encouragement to his Lordship to hope that his prayers would be acceded to. There was, in addition to this answer by the Lieutenant-Governor, an answer by the hon. Minister of the Interior himself to similar requests, which was dated on the 17th March, 1878, and in that we have this statement of his views of the position of the half-breeds of the North-West, and the manner in which they should be dealt with :

"The application of the petitioners to be aided by the Government with seeds and agricultural implements in their farming operations, I confess I am not disposed to view favorably. I do not see upon what grounds the half-breeds can claim to be treated in this particular differently from the white settlers of the Territories.

"The half-breeds, who have in some respects the advantage over new settlers in the Territories, should be impressed with the necessity of settling down in fixed localities, and direct their energies towards pastoral or agricultural pursuits, in which case lands would be no doubt assigned to them in the same way as the white settlers. But beyond this they must not look to the Government for any special assistance in their farming operations."

So that was the opinion of the late Minister of the Interior, the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills). He took the ground that the half-breeds, if they consulted their own interests and the interests of the country, would settle down and become ordinary settlers, pointing out to them that in doing so they had large advantages over white settlers, they being old residents of the country and knowing a good deal about it. So much for that matter. Then there was the question of surveys, about which a good deal has been said. I think no one will pretend to say that so far as the question of surveys was concerned this Parliament is not omnipotent. The law was passed in 1871 which fixed the method of survey in the North-West. The law was continued by hon. gentlemen opposite, and the surveys were made on the same principle. As they began, so the present Government continued, and the instructions went to the surveyors that whenever they found settlers upon land, and those settlers desired survey on the river lot principle, the surveys were to be given to them on that principle, and they were as a matter of fact so given to them. The only place where those surveys were not given was in the famous parish of St. Louis de Langevin, and, as we know from the evidence already furnished to the public, at the time the surveys were made, there were but two settlers on the land, and, therefore, it was not a case in which survey by river lots could be adopted. Settlers went in afterwards and took up land, some of them according to the section or block system of survey, and some have made entry in accordance with that survey. They have asked since that the system be changed. They have been informed, and they have always been informed, that if they chose to take their lands in ten chains or twenty chains frontage, they would have the privilege of doing so; but that the principle cannot be recognised, that the Government having once surveyed territory unoccupied at the time of survey, persons going into that territory afterwards cannot demand that a different system of survey be adopted. I think there is nothing unreasonable and nothing improper in that, because, in so far as the surveys are concerned, it cannot be said that the half-breeds should have any more rights than any other class of settlers who might choose to go in, and a farmer from Ontario going into any part of the North-West and preferring the Ontario system of survey, might as well ask to have that plan followed—having gone in there after the surveys had been made—as that the half-breeds, who went in after survey could demand a change in the system. But, as I have said, they have been assured from the first, that if they

desire to have the land in ten or twenty chain lots, they can have it on that principle, and that information has been given by the officer of the Government on the spot, so that they can get their lands in that way if they desire. Then there is the question of the lands themselves, of the patents. I venture to make this statement, and no one has hitherto at any rate, that I have heard, ventured to contradict it, that no single half-breed has ever been put off his land by any applicant, that no single half-breed has ever lost an acre of land by any action of the Government. They have, on the contrary, been pressed to make their entries, and, if, to-day, they have not their patents the fact is due, not to the system adopted, but entirely to the fact that they themselves had not taken reasonable steps to get their patents. Let me point out to the House what the Government have done in relation to patents for land; and after all I think it was of the greatest possible importance to them that they should procure the land on which they had settled, which they were tilling and on which they had made their homes. I have here a letter addressed to Mr. William Pearce, a member of the Land Board, by Mr. George Duck, who was agent at Prince Albert, and I will read that letter simply for the purpose of showing what pains the Government took in order that those people might be informed how they could get their patents, in order that they might be induced, if possible, to secure their patents, and in that way remove all possible doubt as to their legal possession of their property. The letter is as follows:—

“PRINCE ALBERT, 17th December, 1885.

“DEAR SIR,—It having been reported to the Minister of the Interior during his late visit here that there were a large number of claimants to lands within the parishes of St. Laurent, St. Louis de Langevin and in the vicinity of the South Saskatchewan River, more particularly among the French-speaking population, whose claims to the land had not yet been investigated and who therefore could not obtain entry, this statement is based on insufficient data, as the lists of those claimants which I have assisted you in preparing will show.”

These lists are attached to the report of Mr. Pearce, which has been submitted to the House.

“Upon receiving your instructions in March, 1884,”—

That was some months before Riel came into the country.—

“to investigate these claims I consulted with the Reverend Père André, the superior of the district, as to the best time to carry out the investigation and obtain the information desired. He told me that as many of the claimants were then away from home engaged in freighting, I had better postpone my visit until after Easter, when they would all be at home putting in their crops. I did so and left here for Batoche early in May. On my way up I called in at Grannuin, where I met Père André who told me that he had been waiting for me to tell me that the

people had been holding a series of meetings throughout the settlement and they had decided among other things that they would make no applications for entry for their lands in the office here. After consultation with him I thought it advisable to secure his services to explain fully and clearly the nature of my mission and to show to the people the futility of any such resolution on their part. He went with me to Batoche, and at an interview held in the house of Emmanuel Ohampagne explained fully my object and advised them to file affidavits in support of their claims. The investigation was then proceeded with in as careful and thorough a manner as possible, and it will be seen upon reference to the list numbered 2 before referred to that of the 138 claimants 99 were included in the investigation held by me and whose claims were reported upon, 20 had settled upon lands and had not then or afterwards made entry in accordance with the section survey, 2 had settled in 1884 and made no application for entry or filed any evidence of occupation, leaving 17 claimants whose claims were not investigated, which number includes the names of Moise Ouellette and others who refused to prefer any evidence in regard to their land matters. It was reported to me as long ago as 1882 that these people, even those who had settled and claimed their lands in accordance with the existing survey, had been advised by certain interested parties not to make entry for their lands, for what reason I am unaware unless to coerce the Government into another system of survey on the banks of the river. From the schedule prepared you will see how few were then settlers, on the river, some 42 in all, of whom 22 could have obtained entry if they so desired at that time.

"With reference to the list numbered 1, which includes the names of 75 claimants, 55 have made entry, 1 (Cardinal) has settled on a school section subsequent to the plan of the township being received at the office here, leaving 19 who have never applied for entry but who could have made entry if they had so desired. In accordance with your instructions to Mr. Gauvreau, the assistant agent here, in August, 1883, that gentleman visited the different parts of the district in lists numbers 1, 2 and 3, and explained to them fully the Lands' Act as bearing upon their claims. Upon his return he informed me that the chief reply that he had received from the people he visited was that they were poor and had not the money to make entry. There were no other complaints of any nature.

"With reference to list number 3 of the schedule containing the names of 45 claimants, 7 have made homestead entry, 24 filed evidence of claim before me in July last, 9 were filed before you, this month, of whom the majority were absent at the time of my visit, while the remainder failed to represent their claims although requested by me to do so. Of the remainder, 5 have failed to make any application at all before anyone by reason of their absence either as refugees in the United States or as prisoners at Regina, on account of the recent outbreak, this number includes the claim of the Roman Catholic mission, and as so much has been said about this land I might say that no claim has ever been preferred by any of the Oblats for this land.

"I might state that in reference to the question of hay permits representation was made by me to the Department in June, 1884, to the effect that whereas the hay question was not of that character to warrant the imposition of dues for the protection of the small settler as against the stockman, instructions were sent me not to collect any such fees, and no permits have been issued in this district.

"I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

"GEO. DUCK.

"WILLIAM PEARCE, Esq.,
"Superintendent, Land Board, Winnipeg."

That is the letter from Mr. George Duck, showing that in 1883 Mr. Gauvreau was sent there to impress on these people the necessity of procuring their patents and to instruct

them as to the manner of obtaining them; that in 1884 Mr. Duck procured the assistance of Father André, and again attempted to explain to the people how they could get their lands, and that the difficulty in their obtaining their land was not due to any act of the Government, or anything over which they had control, but was due in the case of some of them to their poverty and in the case of others to their unwillingness to make entry at all. There is no doubt so far as the patents to the land are concerned, that if the half-breeds have not their patents to-day, to them and to them alone is due that fact. Then, Sir, we had the statement made—not to-night, it is true, but we have had it discussed all over the country, we have had it discussed in Parliament, and on the hustings, that the Government had actually driven the people to rebellion, by granting a portion of the lands upon which they were settled to a colonisation company, and that by doing that they had driven the people off the land or, at any rate, had attempted to frighten them off their land. Well, I have here the affidavits of every settler in the parish of St. Louis de Langevin, with one or two exceptions. I shall not trouble the House with reading them. But with these exceptions every one of the settlers on that tract of country, which was supposed to be given to the Prince Albert Colonisation Company, declared either that he did not know of the existence of such a company, and therefore could not know that the land had been awarded to the company, and in the case of one or two who did know it, they had been assured by the agent that they need not be in the slightest degree alarmed, because the company had no power to turn them off the land, being simply the agents of the Government for the settlement of the land, and they were guaranteed by the Government the possession of at least 320 acres like other settlers.

Mr. DAVIES. Will the hon. gentleman lay the affidavits on the Table.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I will put them in *Hansard*, which is better, and will save time.

Mr. DAVIES. Better put them on the Table first.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I am endeavoring to comply with the rule of the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), whose resolution I entirely approved of, in relation to short speeches, and will therefore not detain the House by reading all the affidavits. With its permission I will hand them to the reporters. Here is one affidavit which was made by Mr. Norman McKenzie. You heard it read this morning, so I do not think it is worth while reading it again.

An hon. MEMBER. The House was not in Session this morning.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). True; so I will read it.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Norman McKenzie, of Sec. 12, Tp. 45,
To wit: { R. 27, W. 2nd M., make oath and say:—

1st. In the autumn of 1883 I purchased the claim of one Osborne to a portion of sections 12 and 13, in township 45, range 27, west of 2nd, and during the visit of Mr. Pearce to Prince Albert in January and February, 1884, when adjusting the claims of settlers in the Prince Albert district, I spoke to him about that claim, stating I understood that portion of township 45, R. 27, W. 2, lying south of the river, had been handed over to the Prince Albert Colonization Company, and asked if I would be safe in going on and improving the claim. His reply was that I was perfectly safe in going ahead, that so far as settlement in advance of their opening their agency, and even afterwards, when on even sections, was just the same as any otherlands in the Prince Albert district. That, so far as the even sections were concerned, the Colonization Company was merely agent for the Minister of the Interior, to grant homestead and pre-emption entries thereon, and any settlers on odd sections, in advance of the Colonization Company establishing their agency, the Minister of the Interior reserving in the agreement with the Colonization Company the right to grant to each and every such settler, land to the extent of 320 acres, and in my case, if I was a *bona fide* settler, I would most certainly be protected.

2nd. I never was told by anyone that I would not obtain my entry as desired. In fact, it was always represented to me by the Department of the Interior land officials, that I would obtain my entry, and have been notified that I can make entry, and purpose doing so shortly.

Sworn before me, in Township 47,
Range 26, west of 2nd M., this 11th
day of December, 1885.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Supt.

(Signed)

NORMAN MCKENZIE.

That is the affidavit of Mr. Norman McKenzie.

Mr. LAURIER. What is the date?

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The date is the 11th of December, 1885. I suppose the date does not affect the veracity of the man who swears. I hope the hon. gentleman after his frightful attack upon the Government for having insulted the half-breeds, by bringing down a return, is not going to suggest that all the half-breeds swore falsely, in order to help the Government out of a difficulty.

Mr. LAURIER. My question did not imply that.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). If not that, it implies nothing. Here is another affidavit, from one of the two first settlers:

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Solomon Boucher, of Section 11, Town-
To wit: { ship 45, Range 27, W. 2nd, farmer, make
oath and say:

1st. That I am 23 years of age, came with my father, Jean Baptiste Boucher, my sister, Marie Lavillie, a widow, and my brothers, Jean Baptiste Boucher, junior, and Charles Eugène Boucher. The latter attained the age of 18 years on the 1st December, 1882, together with several other younger brothers and sisters, in August, 1882; and have resided in my father's house on the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ -sec. 11, in said township, continuously since, up to this date. Came from Baie St. Paul, and participated in the Manitoba half-breed grant.

2nd. That my sister, Marie Lavillie, and my brother, Chas. Eugène Boucher, have also been in my father's house, continuously, since August, 1882, except my sister, who has lived in Prince Albert since last March.

3rd. About 2 weeks after we came here, this township was surveyed. At that time we had about 2 acres of breaking; my brother Charles 2 furrows; my sister Marie had about 1 acre; my brother Jean Baptiste Boucher, junior, not certain whether he had any or not.

4th. My sister, Marie Lavillie, has 1 child, and has done no further improvements on the land.

5th. I have now at least 10 acres of breaking, set of house logs worth about \$50, and fencing to the extent of 20 chains, worth \$20.

6th. My brother Eugène has 2 acres breaking and a set of house logs which he sold, and also 20 chains of fencing.

7th. At the time of the survey we were told by the surveyor that we were on a school section; but he said he supposed it was all right, and that we would obtain entry. Since then have never been told that we could not obtain entry. Deferred urging to obtain entry, thinking this would be surveyed into river lots, or entry granted so as practically to give that. Heard this land was within a colonisation company's tract, but no official of that company ever said anything to me, nor do I believe, to any of the family, or I should have heard of it. The fact of this land being within a colonisation company's tract never gave my father, brother, sister, or myself any concern whatever, as we always believed we would eventually obtain entry as we desired.

Sworn before me, at Township 45, Range 24, W. 2nd Meridian, this 9th day of December, 1885, having been first read over and explained to him, and he seemed thoroughly to understand the same.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed)
SOLOMON BOUCHER.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, Jean Baptiste Boucher, junior, of Section 10, Township 45, Range 27, west of the 2nd meridian, farmer, make oath and say

1st. That I have heard read over to me the foregoing affidavit of Solomon Boucher, my brother, concerning the lands mentioned by him and now claimed by myself, my brothers, a sister and mother (and by my mother on behalf of my father, Jean Baptiste Boucher, senior), and that the same is true and correct in every particular, with the exception that at the date of the survey by Hugh Wilson, D.L.S., in 1882, I had 1½ acres of breaking on the westerly 10 chains of section 11-45-27, W. 2, which land I now claim as a pre-emption, and that I particularly state I never heard, nor do I think my family ever heard that the Government had disposed of the land, and that I could not eventually obtain entry therefor, nor that any of the settlers in Township 45, R. 27, W. 2 M. could not obtain entry for their lands as claimed.

Sworn before me at Township 47, Range 26, West of 2nd Meridian, this 11th day of December, 1885. Having been first read over and explained, and he thoroughly seemed to understand the same.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed)
J. BAPTISTE BOUCHER.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, William Bremner, of Section 10-45-27, west 2nd M., farmer, make oath and say :

1st. That I came from the parish of St. Charles, in Manitoba, in August, 1882, with my sons Moise Joseph and Alexander, and my son-in-law J. Baptiste Boucher, to township 45-27, W. 2, and have resided here ever since; lived in St. Charles about 40 years previously.

3rd. That about two weeks after I settled here the survey was made by Hugh Wilson, D.L.S. At the time of survey I had about two acres broken, and the foundation of a house laid. My son Moise had no improvements and remained with me till the following spring. My son Alexander had the foundation of a house laid on the S.-W. $\frac{1}{4}$ 10, which he gave to my son William, who arrived the following year, and then began to have building mentioned on E $\frac{1}{4}$ of W. $\frac{1}{4}$ section 5, and completed the house and commenced to reside thereon in the autumn of 1884. My son Joseph had no improvements at time of survey. Commenced to prepare for building in the winter of 1882-83, and commenced residence in the autumn of 1885, but has been farming it for the past two years, living, however, with me. My son William, since the summer of 1883 has been living on the S.-W. $\frac{1}{4}$ section 10 till the summer of 1885.

3rd. That at the time of survey we had not made up our minds how we would take the land. I came up here on account of my family. They desired the land to be taken up as river lots, and we decided to try and obtain it that way. My son Alexander concluded he would be too much cramped so gave his claim to William Bremner and moved to section 5. We never applied for entry at D. L. office, Prince Albert, waiting to see whether entry would be granted in 10 chain river frontage or not.

4th. That I never was told, nor do I believe, my sons or son-in-law were, or I should have heard of it, that we could not obtain entry for the land as we desired it. Brel once told me, possibly we would not obtain it. Had we believed him we would then have abandoned it, nor continued to make further improvements as we have done.

Sworn before me at Prince Albert,
this 9th day of December, 1885, after
having been first read over and ex-
plained to him thoroughly which he
seemed to understand fully.

(Signed) WILLIAM PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Sgd.) WILLIAM ^{his} BREMNER
mark

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Moise Bremner, of Section 10, Tp. 45,
To Wit: { Range 27, W. 2nd M., farmer, make oath
and say:

1st. That I am the Moise Bremner mentioned in the foregoing affidavit of my father. Wm. Bremner, and that I have heard read over to me the foregoing affidavit of said Wm. Bremner, and that all the statements therein contained are true in substance and in fact, and I particularly declare that I, nor do I believe any of the settlers in Township 45, Range 27, W. 2nd M., were ever told by any one who could speak with any authority or who knew anything reliable about our land claims, that anyone would lose his or her claim.

Sworn before me at Section 10-45-27,
W. 2nd, this 9th day of December, 1885,
having first been read over and explained
to him, who seemed to fully understand
the same.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed)

MOISE BREMNER.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Joseph Bremner, of Section 10, Tp. 45,
To Wit: { Range 27, W. 2nd M., farmer, make oath
and say:

1st. That I am the Joseph Bremner mentioned in the affidavit of Wm. Bremner, my father, corroborated by my brothers Moise and Alexander in an affidavit dated the 9th December, 1885, respecting the land claims of the said William Bremner, Moise Bremner and Alexander Bremner,

and my own claim, and those of settlers generally in Township 45, Range 27, West 2nd M., particularly those portions relating to not obtaining our claims, the land covered by them having been handed over or sold by the Government to other individuals, corporation or colonisation company, and declare that the statements contained in the declaration of Wm. Bremner, corroborated by the said Moise and Alexander Bremner, are true and correct in every particular, except regarding the statement of said Wm. Bremner as to date Alexander commenced residence on his claim, it being, as stated by Alexander, in April, 1884, not autumn, 1884, as stated by William Bremner.

Sworn before me at Township 48—27, W. 2nd, this 12th day of December, 1885, it having been first read over and explained thoroughly, and he fully understood what he was subscribing to.

(Signed) Wm. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed)

JOSEPH BREMNER.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: } I, Alexander Bremner, of Section 5-45-27,
To wit: } West 2nd, farmer, make oath and say:

1st. That I am the Alexander Bremner spoken of in the foregoing affidavit of my father, William Bremner, and state that everything mentioned therein is true and correct in every particular, except that I began residence on Section 5 in April, 1884, not autumn of 1884, as he states.

2nd. I further state that the foregoing statements of my father, William Bremner, and my brother, Moise Bremner, referring to the land claims of settlers in township 45-27, W. of 2nd, being handed over to any corporation, individual or colonisation company, are true and correct. For my part I always believed I would have to treat with the Government and no one else, and, I believe, all the other settlers thought likewise. The only delay we anticipated being in obtaining entry as we desired in 10 chains, not in quarter sections as surveyed before I took it up.

Sworn before me at Sec. 5-45-27, West 2nd M., this 9th day of Dec., 1885. Having been first read over (3 affidavits) carefully, and seemed fully to understand the same.

(Signed) Wm. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed) his
ALEXANDER X BREMNER.
mark.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Jonas Lavolette, of Township 45,
To Wit: { Range 27, West of 2nd Meridian, farmer,
make oath and say:—

1st. That I have lived in this neighborhood ever since the summer of 1882—the greater portion of the time in Township 45, Range 28, West of the 2nd Meridian.

2nd. That when I purchased Wm. Swain's claim, to which I now claim entry, that is, E. $\frac{1}{2}$ of L. S. 4, 5, 12 and 13 of Sec. 3, and E. $\frac{1}{2}$ of L. S. 4 and 5, of Section 10, Tp 45, R. 27, W. 2nd, supposed I would acquire the right to make homestead entry for said claim; I asked Louis Schmidt, and he told me he thought I could. The neighbors and people generally who live in this vicinity informed me to the same effect. I never heard the Government had sold or given this land, or any land in this township, to any person or corporation. Never heard that any of the settlers in this vicinity had been told by anyone that they

would not obtain their claims, and believed that eventually entry would be granted in 10-chain claims, fronting on the river.

Sworn before me at Township 45, Range 27, W. 2nd M., this 9th day of December, 1885, having been read over and interpreted in French to him by Louis Mariot, and he seemed to understand the same.

His
JONAS X LAVIOLLETTE
mark.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

I certify I was present and heard the foregoing translated into French to deponent, and he seemed to thoroughly understand the same.

(Signed) GEO. DUCK.

ST. LOUIS DE LANGEVIN,
9th December, 1885.

"At the time I settled upon this land, though it was surveyed, I did not know anything about quarter-sections. Found there was a piece fronting on the river which no one claimed; I took possession of it. Never applied for entry, nor was I told the land belonged to anyone except the Government. Never was told my claim had been sold by the Government to anyone, or corporation, or colonisation company. Supposed I would obtain entry whenever I might apply. No one ever told me I would not obtain my land, nor did I ever hear it stated that any of the settlers in township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian, or in any other locality along the river, would not obtain their land."

Extracted from a statement made under oath by Elzevir Swain concerning his claim to part of sections 3 and 10, township 45, range 27, west of the second meridian, and sworn to before Mr. Superintendent Pearce, at township 45, range 27, west 2nd meridian, on the 10th day of December, 1885.

"I wished to move to Baie St. Paul, Manitoba, so as to have schooling for the children, and urged my husband to sell out. He offered the place and its improvements for \$200 to one McLeod in June last. At the time we settled it was surveyed; desired to settle on the river on account of obtaining fish. We might possibly have obtained a quarter-section, but the settlers generally wished to have 10-chain lots fronting on the river, so we concluded to take it the same way. Never applied at the land office for entry, always thought we would obtain it as desired, but did not expect to obtain entry till we asked for it. Always supposed that the Government would give it us when we applied for it. Never was told by anyone we would not obtain it, nor that it had been sold by the Government to any individual, corporation or colonisation company."

Extracted from a statement made and sworn to by Elizabeth Richard, concerning her husband's, Antoine Richard, claim to portions of sections 4 and 9, township 45, range 27, west of the second meridian, before Mr. Superintendent Pearce, at township 45, range 27, west 2nd meridian, on the 10th day of December, 1885, being her answers to questions No. 2, 40 and 42 of said statement.

Her statement is corroborated by an affidavit sworn to by her husband.

"Never was told, nor did I ever hear, that the Government had granted this land to anyone or corporation, nor did I ever believe we would not obtain entry. The only thing that I was afraid of was that entry would be granted by quarter-sections, but held on, hoping to obtain entry as I now apply for it."

The above is an extract from a statement made and sworn to by William Bruce, concerning his claim to portions of sections 4 and 8, township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian, being in answer to question No. 42 of said statement before Mr. Superintendent Pearce, at township 45, range 27, west 2nd meridian, on the 9th day of December, 1885.

"Never was told by any one that my husband could not obtain entry—or since his death—myself.

"It was inconvenient for me to go and file my application before Mr. Duck here last summer. I wanted my son, Magloire, to enter for it, but he refused, wishing me to have it myself.

"Always supposed we would get this land in 10 chains fronting on the river. If my husband or myself ever imagined we would lose this land we would have abandoned it long ago, and not gone on to make improvements."

The above is an extract from a statement made and sworn to by Marguerite Boyer, concerning her claim to portions of sections 4 and 9, township 45, range 27, W. of the second meridian (being her answer to question 42 of said statement) before Mr. Superintendent Pearce, at township 45, Range 27, W. 2nd meridian, on the 9th day of December, 1885, and corroborated by the following affidavit:

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, Jean Baptiste Boyer, of sections 4 and
To wit : { 9, township 45, range 27, west of the 2nd
meridian, make oath, and say :—

That I claim homestead entry to E $\frac{1}{2}$ lots 2, 6, 11 and 14 of section 4, and east $\frac{1}{2}$ of lots 3 and 6 (south of river) of section 9, 45—27, W. 2. Have lived in township 45 since 1893, and know whereof I state, and I most emphatically state I never was told by anyone that entry could not be obtained by the settlers in township 45—27, W. 2, for the lands claimed by them.

Sworn before me at Prince Albert, this 11th day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, having been read over carefully to him, and he seems perfectly to understand.

(Signed) Wm. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

(Signed)

J. BAPTISTE ^{his} X BOYER.
mark.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Magloire Boyer, of township 45, range
To wit: { 27, W. of 2nd Meridian, make oath, and
say:

That I know Marguerite Boyer who has made oath to the affidavit hereto attached, and so far as her answers to questions numbers 1, 3, 5, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 27, 28, 28, 30, 32, 35, 40, 42 and 45, I know them to be correct in every particular.

That I most emphatically state I never was told by anyone that entry could not be obtained by the settlers in this township, or that the Government had sold the land to any corporation.

Sworn before me at Prince Albert,
N.W.T., this 13th day of December,
in the year of our Lord 1885.

(Signed) **WM. PEARCE,**
Superintendent.

(Signed) **MAGLOIRE BOYER.**

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, Alade Lègaré, of Township 45, Range
To wit : { 27, west of 2nd Meridian, farmer, make
oath and say :—

1st. That I claim to enter for E $\frac{1}{2}$ of E $\frac{1}{2}$ 5, and that portion of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 8, lying south of the river, all in Township 45, Range 27, west of 2nd meridian.

2nd. That I have lived during the past five years in the neighborhood of this land, living nearly the whole time in township 45—28 W. 2nd, and first laid claim to the above lands in 1882; first made improvements on said claim in 1883, have never lived on it.

3rd. Never was told that the Government had granted any portion of township 45-27, W. 2nd meridian, to any person or corporation, and that entry therefor could not be obtained; nor did I ever hear anyone state he or she had been told the same or anything to that effect, and always thought entry would be granted in 10-chain claims. The delay in making entry was to obtain it in such claims fronting on the river, one of which I desired as a homestead, and the other as pre-emption.

Sworn before me at Township 45,
Range 27, West of 2nd Meridian, this
9th day of December, 1885. Having
been first read over and explained,
and he seemed to thoroughly under-
stand the same.

(Signed) ALADE LÉGARÉ.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

"Never was told I could not obtain entry for this. Other people wishing to have their claims in 10 chain lots, concluded I would also have one. Never was told the Government had sold or granted this land to any individual, corporation or colonisation company, and always thought that eventually entry would be given as the other settlers in this township desired. Never was told by Riel that I would not obtain entry for this land as claimed."

The above extract is from a statement made under oath by Modeste Laviolette concerning his claim to a portion of Section 5 Township 45, Range 27, West of the 2nd Meridian, being his reply to question No. 42, of this statement. Sworn before Mr. Superintendent Pearce, at Prince Albert, on the 12th day of December, 1885.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, Solomon Boucher, of Township 45 Range
To wit : { 27 West 2nd M., Farmer, make oath and
say :

1st. That the walls of a building on the North-West quarter of Section 5, Tp. 45, R. 27, W. 2 M., intended for a chapel were erected in the spring of 1884. The building is 21 x 32, the logs in the same are flattened on two sides and as they stand are worth \$1.25 each.

2nd. One William Bruce had the contract to put on a shingle roof, but failed to do so. Bruce was paid to some extent on said contract.

Sworn before me at Township 45 R., 27,
W. 2 M., this 9th day of December, 1885,
having been read over and explained to
him and he appeared thoroughly to under-
stand the same.

(Signed)

SOLOMON BOUCHER.

(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Magloire Boyer, of Township 45, Range
To wit: { 27, West of 2nd Meridian, make oath and
say:

That I know Marguerite Boyer who has made oath to the affidavit hereto attached and so far as her answers to questions numbered 1, 3, 5, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 27, 21, 26, 28, 30, 32, 35, 40, 42 and 43, I know them to be correct, and believe the remainder are true and correct in every particular.

That I most emphatically state I never was told by anyone that entry could not be obtained by the settlers in this township or that the Government had sold the land to any corporation.

Sworn before me at Prince Albert, N - W.
T., this 13th day of December, in the year (Signed)
of our Lord 1885. WM. PEARCE, MAGLOIRE BOYER.
(Signed) Superintendent.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { In addition to the above affidavit taken
To Wit: { before George Duck on the 23rd day of
July last, I further state:

That I claimed this as a 10-chain river lot. My neighbors wishing to have it in 10-chain claims, I supposed I would also obtain a 10-chain lot. Knew it was surveyed into quarter-sections at time I took up claim; never applied for entry and always supposed I would obtain one. Never was told by anyone that this land had been sold or granted in any way by the Government to any corporation, individual, or colonisation company. Never was told by Riel that entry could not be obtained for this land or any of it in township 45, range 27, west 2nd meridian, nor did I hear any of the settlers in said township state they could not obtain entry for these lands.

Sworn before me at township 45, range
27, west of second meridian, this 10th day
of December, 1885, having first been read
in French by Louis Mariot and he seemed
thoroughly to understand to what he was
subscribing. (Signed) ALEX. LAMIRANDE.
(Signed) WM. PEARCE,
Superintendent.

Appendix to affidavit taken before Geo. Duck at St. Louis de Langevin, on the 23rd day of July, 1885, and sworn to by the said Alexandre Lamirande.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES: { I, Alexander McDougall, of section 13,
To Wit: { township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian,
farmer, make oath and say:

1st. That when I settled on this land in November, 1884, I took up this claim as I did because it was generally considered that entry would be given us by legal sub-divisions or portions thereof so as to give the settlers a river frontage extending back from the river about 1½ to 2 miles.

2nd. That I never was informed that any portion of this township belonged to a colonisation company, and have not been to this day notified to that effect, having always understood that the colonisation company's tract did not extend further north than the southerly limit of township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian.

3rd. That I hoped to obtain entry, 20 chains in width, extending back 1 mile from the river.

Sworn before me at township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian, this 9th day of December, 1885. Having first been read over to him and thoroughly explained and was understood perfectly by him.
(Signed) Wm. PEARCE, Superintendent. } (Signed) his
ALEX. X McDOUGALL.
mark

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES : { I, Charles Eugène Boucher, of section 1,
To Wit: { township 45, range 27, west of 2nd meridian, farmer, make oath and say :

That I am the Charles Eugène Boucher mentioned in the attached affidavit of my brother Solomon Boucher; that I have heard read over to me the said affidavit of my brother concerning the lands mentioned by him, and now claimed by myself, my brothers and sister and by my mother on behalf of my father, Jean Baptiste Boucher, senior, and that the same is true and correct in every particular, and that I particularly state that I never heard nor do I think that any of my father's family ever heard that the Government had disposed of the land, and that we could not eventually obtain entry in the land office therefor, nor that any of the settlers in township 45-27, west of 2nd meridian could not obtain entry for their lands as claimed.

Sworn before me at Prince Albert this 17th day of December, A.D., 1885, having been first read over and he thoroughly seemed to understand the same.
(Signed) Wm. PEARCE, Superintendent. } (Signed) CHAS. EUG. BOUCHER.

I believe there were only two who ever heard there was a company, all the others swearing that they did not know there was such a thing. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I may fairly say that under these circumstances the hon. gentleman and those who join with him in attacking the Government can hardly claim that they have succeeded in making out any case against the Government. We have this important fact, that no half-breed has ever been removed from his land by any act of the Government, that no half-breed has ever been disturbed in the possession of his land; and I know of countries where the people would be happy if they could say the same thing. Why, Sir, in the adjoining county of Ottawa, when the hon. gentleman who sits opposite (Mr. Langelier) was Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Province of Quebec, settlers were attempted to be driven off their lands because they had not complied with all the conditions imposed by the Government. Then we have this further fact, in relation to their patents, that the Government, so far from refusing them patents, sent their officers in order that they might

personally impress upon the half-breeds the manner in which patents could be obtained, and urge them, if possible, to make the entry necessary to obtain their lands. In the North-West it is absolutely necessary in the obtaining of lands, that there should be general rules which all persons must follow; and it was not too much for this Government, nor is it too much for any Government, to ask that those who have possession of lands in the North-West shall use the reasonable means and conform to the conditions required by the Government in order to get the entry of those lands, and to obtain their patents. The Government not only did this, but they adopted a principle by which the settlement duties performed in advance of survey, and in advance of the entry of lands, even where they were permitted to make their entries long after survey, should all count as if they had been performed after survey. The ordinary white settler going into the North-West and settling on surveyed lands is required at once to make entry. There is no such thing recognised by the law as a squatter upon surveyed lands. But we have dealt in an entirely different manner with those half-breeds. They have been protected against the cancellation which white settlers in similar circumstances are subject to; and they were given, and are still being given, time to make their entry, their own convenience alone being consulted, and their whole time being counted as if that time had been spent after the entry was made. Then, as to the surveys, the principle has been adopted that wherever a considerable number of settlers were on the land at the time the survey was made, that survey should be made according to the principle required by the settlers; but when the surveyor went into a district where there were no settlers, or where, as in the case of the parish of St. Louis de Langevin, there were but two settlers, the system adopted all over the North-West was followed; but even in such cases, these people were told that they could have their patents upon the principle of the river lot survey if they chose to take their land upon that principle, and to make the necessary sub-division. Then, as to the Indian title, we know that the Government as far back as 1883 passed an Order in Council that Mr. Russell should go to the North-West, and being on the spot, should enquire into and make a report upon all these claims. The difficulties that existed in dealing with that question were difficulties arising out of a conflict of opinion between those parties who were, from their position, supposed to be best able to judge of the necessities of the half-breeds in the North-West and not from the Government refusing or ignoring

their just rights. As to the general treatment of these people by the Government, it has been of the most kindly nature, and for the very best of all reasons, that being the original inhabitants of the country, having been there in advance of our occupation of the country, they were entitled to the greatest possible consideration; and that consideration has been given to them in every respect. I am perfectly satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that the attempt made by hon. gentlemen opposite to make out that the Government were in any way responsible for the outbreak of last spring, or that the refusal of these claims for the extinguishment of the Indian title had anything to do with it, will utterly fail. In fact, the hon. gentleman himself, in his closing remarks, practically admitted as much by pointing out that the people in the district in which the outbreak took place, in their petition did not ask for the extinguishment of the Indian title, but asked for other things, some of which are asked for by white settlers in the North-West as well—all matters of public policy relating to the interests of the whole country, and not to be dealt with exclusively for any one section. Sir, I leave the matter entirely in the hands of the House, and I am perfectly satisfied that the verdict of the House—sustained as I believe that verdict will be by the country—will be that the so-called grievances of the half-breeds of the North West had no basis to justify, or even to palliate the troubles that occurred last spring, still less, Sir, to justify or palliate the language which has been used in this House in relation to those supposed grievances, and in relation to those who took up arms ostensibly to redress them. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the House for the attention you have given me.

Mr. DAVIES. I very much fear, Sir, that the hon. Minister of the Interior has delivered the wrong speech. The hon. gentleman has the reputation of being somewhat of a skilled debater, and no one knew better than he did that the issue that was tendered for the consideration of the House by my hon. friend from East Quebec was a single issue, clear, definite, and distinct. The hon. gentleman has not attempted to grapple with that issue at all, except in a very limited degree, to which I will refer directly. In fact, in his opening remarks he told the House that it was not his intention to do so, that he intended to deal with the whole question of the North-West grievances. Well, Sir, I for one regret very much that the hon. gentleman took that course. I regret it because the question is so large and intricate that the discussion of one point at a time,

such as that tendered by my hon. friend, will vastly facilitate the arrival at just conclusions on the part of members of the House and the country. Hon. members will remember well that last year, when the leader of the Opposition presented a resolution to this House on the general topic of the North-West grievances, and when he delivered a luminous, lengthy and able speech, in which he massed all the evidence together, and submitted a resolution based on his conclusions, he was reprimanded by the leader of the Government, who complained bitterly that all these matters had been mixed together, so that it was impossible to answer them in detail. Why, he asked, does the hon. gentleman mix up the question of civil rights with those of colonisation companies, surveys of land, the Indian title and others? It is impossible for anyone to answer him on all these points in one speech, and the result will be the public mind will be so perplexed as to be unable to draw any fair conclusions from the debate. My hon. friend from Huron (Mr. Cameron) initiated the other night a new policy. He tendered a distinct issue to the House as to the manner in which the Government dealt with the Indians, and that question was discussed separately from other questions. The hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) has tendered a distinct issue to-night, namely:

"That it was the duty of the Government to proceed with diligence, under the authority they obtained from Parliament in 1879, to settle the claims arising out of the Indian title of the half-breed claims of the North-West Territories, and also to settle the claims of those of the Manitoba half-breeds who were temporarily absent during the enumeration."

And concluding that the Government has been guilty of neglect, delay and mismanagement in that regard. Here was a clear, definite issue presented to the House. How has that been met? My hon. friend (Mr. White), in his speech an hour and a half long, treated the House to a dissertation on the claims of the settlers, and the action of colonisation companies, and claims he has proofs that no settlers were dispossessed of their lands,—questions altogether alien to that before the House. But those who have watched the hon. gentleman for some time will understand why he took this course. He did so, evidently, because he was not able to answer the indictment presented upon this issue. The evidence introduced by my hon. friend from Quebec East (Mr. Laurier), in support of his resolution, was overwhelming, and the hon. Minister knew that the only course open to him in his defence, was to distract the minds of the members, if possible, from that issue by mixing it up with others. The hon. gentleman brought down a number of affidavits to which I will not refer now. We made a short

time ago serious complaints that we were not furnished with proper information, and the hon. gentleman then contended that we had all the information necessary on which to base an opinion; yet we see him here, day after day, as the political exigencies of the case require, bringing down to this House just such papers as suit him. I ask if this is a fair way of dealing with the House? The hon. gentleman referred to the report of Mr. Pierce, a report, I understand, prepared at his instigation, and the instructions for the preparation of which have been withheld, but that report does not deal, directly or indirectly, with the proposition now before the House, nor, if every word of it were true, and if the inferences to be fairly derived from all the facts it states were massed together, would they enable us to form a conclusion bearing on the resolution my hon. friend has submitted. It has nothing to do with the extinction of the Indian title: it has nothing to do with this great grievance which the hon. gentleman knows tended to bring about very largely the insurrection. The hon. gentleman has referred to the Order in Council made in 1883, and the report directing that the office of which he is now the head should be sub-divided in a certain way, so that Mr. Lindsay Russell might be appointed Surveyor-General and proceed to the North-West. Why did the hon. gentleman make that statement? Did he wish us to conclude from it that the Government or Mr. Russell had done anything? Does he state that in that Order in Council the Government showed any evidence of a disposition to settle the Indian title question? Did Mr. Russell proceed to the west to make an enumeration of the half-breeds? or did he act on the power which, in 1879, the Government took from the House? No; when the hon. gentleman drags this into the debate, he does it for the purpose of inducing those who have not carefully studied the question, to believe that the Government really took some steps to mitigate this great grievance. Why, their action had nothing more to do with the matter than have the affidavits the hon. gentleman referred to. The hon. gentleman stated further that, as regards the point where the rebellion rose, the major part of those who took part in it had their Indian title already extinguished, and that therefore that grievance was not the cause of the rebellion. The hon. gentleman must surely have listened to the argument, he did not attempt to controvert it, presented by the mover of the resolution, in which the latter showed that if it was only the local grievance existing in the minds of the leaders of the rebellion, that they were the main spring of the revolt, it would have been a mere riot and not a rebellion. No; it was the moral effect

those insurgents derived from the existence of great grievances throughout the country that gave force to the rebellion, and no man knows better than the hon. gentleman that if it had not been for the existence of those grievances, for the removal of which the half-breeds had petitioned year after year, and to facilitate the removal of which the hon. gentleman and his friends never, until the last moment, raised a finger, the rebellion never would have assumed greater proportions than those of an unlawful assembly or riot. The hon. gentleman went to the North-West last year, as the Minister of the Interior. I think he did right. I think it is a matter for regret that his predecessors had not taken the same course years ago. It was their duty to have informed themselves, personally, with reference to the facts of the grievances stated in the petitions which, year after year, poured into the Department, and which were pigeonholed with that masterly inactivity that characterised the Department in the past five or six years. But when the hon. gentleman returned, after having saturated his mind with the facts, did he arrive at the conclusion that it was because of the settlers' grievances alone the rebellion assumed the important proportions it did? He knows well that the conclusion he formed in his mind was, that had the grievances of the North-West half-breeds, relative to the extinguishment of the Indian title, been removed years ago, there never would have been a rebellion at all. He stated when he returned from his trip, in a speech he delivered on 16th December, at Weston, that the very action taken by the Government, the tardy incomplete action in January, 1885, when the rebellion was almost under way, precipitated the rebellion itself. What action? The action taken to settle the North-West half-breed grievances in relation to the extinguishment of the Indian title alone. That the hon. gentleman said was the backbone of the rebellion, and it was, he said, their efforts to settle that, their tardy efforts to extend the right hand of fellowship to the half-breeds, that precipitated the rebellion; because the leader of the rebellion knew that if we settled that question, we would have removed many grievances and taken from him the support of a large number of his followers. What did the hon. gentleman say?

"Now then, gentlemen, it will be asked, how then did the rebellion occur? How was it that, if these things were settled, this rebellion broke out? I believe it broke out because of the action of the Government, and not because of its inaction. It broke out, as Mr. Astley has stated in his letter, and which information he got from Riel himself, because Riel, seeing that the Government had taken action and that the half-breed claims, such as they were, were about to be settled, believed that his little game will be spoiled."

The hon. gentleman, remark you, had come back from the North-West, he had acquired personal knowledge of the facts, he knew that these grievances had rankled in the breasts of these unfortunate people for years and years, and he knew, when he stated that, that if they had taken time by the forelock, if they had moved a year, or even six months earlier than they did, the cause of the rebellion would have been removed, and we never would have had a rebellion at all. I think I am justified in making the charge, and basing it upon the hon. gentleman's own evidence, that, if it had not been for the delay and inaction of the Government, and for their subsequent ill-advised action at the wrong time, the rebellion would never have taken place. So much for that point. Then the hon. gentleman went on to show that certain Qu'Appelle half-breeds were not influenced by any grievances of their own as to the extinguishment of the Indian title, but that their object was to get possession of the whole of the lands of the North-West. But did the hon. gentleman state when that mind took possession of the half-breeds? Was that their mind before Riel rose and before the Duck Lake tragedy? No, but it was their mind after the success of Riel had induced those unfortunate people to believe that he was going to be successful all around, and so their heads were turned. That was their state of mind after the rebellion broke out, but it was not their state of mind when the rebellion broke out, and it was not that which induced the rebellion. Let us look for a few moments—I promise the House not to be very lengthy upon the subject—at one or two prominent facts in connection with this particular question now before the House, in order that we may judge whether or not this question entered largely into those motives which induced the North-West half-breeds to rebel. How many half-breeds do we find there are in the North-West? I think I am speaking correctly when I say something about 4,800. If I am incorrect, I will thank the hon. gentleman to correct me. Of those 4,800, it appears by the evidence produced by the Government themselves that their own commissioner has reported that 2,000 had just claims which were undressed. The hon. gentleman shakes his head. I think I am not far astray. I am speaking, of course, with reference to the whole question of the half-breeds of Manitoba and the North-West.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Dead and alive.

Mr. DAVIES. I think Mr. Street reports that he has settled nearly 2,000 claims.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). He settled 1,710 claims, and that includes the dead whose heirs were settled with.

Mr. DAVIES. Does the hon. gentleman say that these were all that were settled? There were 300 settled besides, making about 2,000. I may be a few astray, but I am approximately near the truth, so near it that I may say there were nearly 2,000 settled with. So that out of 4,800 half-breeds, nearly 2,000 were shown to have real grievances which were acknowledged by the Government commissioner and reported upon. That was an enormous proportion, and I think I shall be able to show that these were not grievances of a day, but, as shown by my hon. friend who moved this resolution, were of long-standing, and had been presented to the Government not once or twice but scores of times, not by the half-breeds alone, but by all those who had knowledge of the matter and who lived in that country, by their priests, by their bishops, by their magistrates, by the only body they had to represent them, the North-West Council, by the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, by the members of the North-West Council individually and by the council collectively, and by all those whose duty it was to bring this matter to the notice of the Government. Let me for a moment go back to the inception of this matter, and I will rapidly run over the historical points. I wish to call attention to the real question at issue and to eliminate those side issues which the hon. gentleman (Mr. White), for a purpose of his own, has introduced into this discussion. I wish to do this in order that we may come to a clear and intelligent conclusion upon the clear issue which is presented to us. We know that in 1870, 1,400,000 acres were set apart to settle the Manitoba half-breed claims under the Administration of the present leader of the Government. Only the children of the half-breeds of Manitoba were to participate in that grant. From 1870 to 1873, when the hon. gentleman went out of power, nothing whatever was done to carry out the law. We find that, when the hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie) came into power in 1874, he introduced a Bill extending to the heads of families as well as their children the right to participate in these grants; and in April, 1875, the Dominion lands agent at Winnipeg, and Messrs. Ryan & Machar, the commissioners, were appointed to take the census of the unenumerated half-breeds. We find that, in 1876, they reported, and reported that their work was still incomplete, and Mr. Ryan was ordered to take evidence anywhere in the Territories within two years. I understand the hon. gentleman to complain that there was inaction on the part of the

Government of the hon. member for East York. There may have been inaction; I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the facts to undertake to reply on that point; but, from reading the papers which have been brought down, it appears to me that all that was ever done in the matter was done by those gentlemen before they went out of power. They appointed these commissioners to take evidence in order to carry out the law; they directed them to take the evidence wherever they went, and they did more than that, and that is what the hon. gentleman complains of. At that time remember that the half-breeds had not settled in settlements as they did later. The buffalo were not all gone from the plains then. Many of the half-breeds were engaged in buffalo hunting; and the only complaint the hon. gentleman makes is that the Government did not order these commissioners to follow the buffalo and to follow the half-breeds with the buffalo, and to take their evidence as they roamed about the plains. But they did order them, and it seems to me reasonable, wherever they were, in the discharge of their duties, when a half-breed offered his evidence to take it. And they did take it. In 1877 Newcome and Mills, at Emerson and Portage la Prairie, were ordered to take evidence, and in June, 1878, the then Minister of the Interior announced that he had appointed Duck to make an investigation, and I believe in February, 1878, he reported that he had made that investigation. Hon. gentlemen may ask was this matter of the half-breeds' grievance in relation to the extinguishment of the Indian title brought to the notice of the Government? Was there not neglect on their part in lying by? Did they not, by allowing it to lay in abeyance, almost waive their claim? If you look at this mass of papers, which I say, after a thorough examination of it, is a disgrace to the Department which brought it down —

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Why?

Mr. DAVIES. Because the papers are so inextricably mixed up that it is impossible to find what you require.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). After they had been handled by your leader, and tossed about.

Mr. BLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I must not allow that observation to go without an immediate challenge. I answered it before, and I say it is indecent for the hon gentleman to repeat it. I got those papers as they were sent to me by the directions of the Clerk of this House, and they reached the printers in the precise form and order in which they were brought down to the House. I state that now, Sir, upon my responsibility as a member.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). How does the hon. gentleman know that they reached the printers as he carried them away?

Mr. BLAKE, I know how they were when I handed them back to the Clerk.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). They were handled by him and others, and I know, as former chairman of the Printing Committee, that we used to have the greatest difficulty in getting papers that went into his hands, because they used to be handled by him in such a way and kept back until we had to send for them.

Mr. DAVIES. This insinuation of the hon. member only makes the matter worse, in my opinion. The hon. gentleman knows that these papers are arranged with no order. I looked through them myself. When he was in a calmer mood the other day he distinctly acknowledged in this House that the arrangement of the papers was disgraceful.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I say so now.

Mr. DAVIES. Notwithstanding this disgraceful arrangement, notwithstanding the almost—I was going to say—design apparent on their face, by which they are so arranged that nobody could understand them, I have taken a good deal of trouble in going through them, and I have no hesitation in saying that from 1878 down to 1885, not a year went by without petitions being forwarded from those half-breeds, and those who represent them, to the Department of the Interior, praying that they would take up this question and settle it. We find in June, 1878, a petition from Prince Albert, forwarded through Captain Moore, and signed by 151 of these half-breeds, as I find it upon page 29 of these precious papers. These petitioners represent:

“Your petitioners would humbly represent that their rights in the participation in the issue of half-breed or settlers’ scrip are as valid and binding as those of the half-breeds and old settlers of Manitoba, and are expected from them to be regarded by the Canadian Government as scrupulously as in that Province, and with a view to the adjustment of the same, your petitioners would humbly request that a census of said half-breeds and old settlers be taken, at as early a date as may conveniently be determined upon, with a view of apportioning to those of them who have not already been included in the census of Manitoba, their just allotment of land and scrip.”

In February, 1878, Gabriel Dumont and John Fisher, chairman and secretary respectively of a public meeting of half-breeds held at St. Laurent, presented another petition to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, praying for similar treatment as that accorded to the Manitoba half-breeds. This is found on page 28, and reads as follows:—

"That there be granted to each half-breed head of family, and to their children, who have not participated in the distribution of scrip and lands in the Province of Manitoba, a like amount of scrip and like land grants as in Manitoba."

Then in April, 1878, Lieutenant-Governor Laird forwards a petition of the half-breeds of Prince Albert, praying for similar treatment; to be found on page 25, wherein they pray :

"That all the heads of families of half-breeds and their children who have not participated in the distribution of scrip and lands in the Province of Manitoba, to allow such like scrip and grants of lands to those allowed in the said province, at least that bush land be granted to them."

Then we find in August, 1878, the North-West Council passing a resolution, praying that the half-breed claims be granted—to be found on page 36. I will read that resolution, because I deem it of more than ordinary importance. It is a resolution of the only representative body that these poor people possess; it is a resolution of intelligent, educated men, men who felt their responsibility in making their statements; and we may assume that the North-West Council would not put upon record statements of that kind unless they personally knew them to be true. They say :

"That it would be injudicious to set apart reserves of land for the half-breeds of the North-West Territories, to give them negotiable scrip.

"That in view, however, of the fact that grants of land or issue of scrip were made to the half-breeds of Manitoba towards the extinguishment of the Indian titles to the lands of that Province, there will undoubtedly be general dissatisfaction amongst the half-breeds of said territories, unless they receive some little consideration."

The Government here are informed, on the responsibility and the authority of the only representative body in that country, that there will be general dissatisfaction until they take this matter up and grant some relief to the half-breeds. Then they go on to suggest a form in which that grant should be given; but I need not trouble the House with it because the Government were bound to act under the authority they took from Parliament in 1879. They did not suggest a particular plan for settling these grievances; they only asked Parliament to give them power to deal with them. They were then bound, after taking that power, to take proper evidence and to find a proper way to act upon the evidence so as to remove the grievances, but they did not do it. Going on with the record, we find that in August, 1878, a petition from the Cypress Mountain half-breeds was forwarded to the Government, to be found at page 32, in which they also set forth their grievances, and state :

"That the majority of us, upon the cession of the Province to the Canadian Government, were temporarily absent, and were thereby

deprived of the benefits of the scrips given to those half-breeds who were at that time present in the Province."

Then we have Mr. Laird's despatch, in which he urges the Government to take action upon it. We have that despatch acknowledged, and on the 28th December, 1878, we have Col. Dennis submitting that celebrated memorandum to the Minister, and asking his immediate attention to it. That memorandum was read by the mover of the resolution, and I need not read it again. The Deputy-Head of the Department was fully apprised of the importance of this question and of the necessity of dealing with it immediately. He was informed, that if they did not deal with it immediately, it would be a cause of general dissatisfaction, natural dissatisfaction, which we would feel ourselves, had we been some of those unfortunate half-breeds. Well, Sir, what was done with that memorandum of the Deputy-Head? It was very properly, I think, submitted to Archbishop Taché, to the Bishop of the Saskatchewan, to Lieut.-Governor Laird and to Mr. Richardson, the magistrate, to obtain their opinions upon it. They made each of them their reports, and the Government are in possession of the suggestions they made with respect to that memorandum. I charge, Mr. Speaker, that although they were in possession of these, although they had got, ostensibly, all the information they asked for, and although they were in a position to deal exhaustively with the question, they followed that policy of masterly inactivity for which they are so much renowned—they did nothing. Now, let us look for a moment at the powers this Government took from Parliament. Section 125 of the Dominion Lands Act, 1879, enacts:

"The following powers are hereby delegated to the Governor in Council:—

"(e) To satisfy any claim existing in connection with the extinguishment of the Indian title, preferred by half-breed residents in the North-West Territories outside of the limits of Manitoba, on the 15th day of July, 1870, by granting lands to such persons, to such extent and on such terms and conditions as may be deemed expedient."

Now, Sir, the Minister of the Interior has criticised at some length the reports made to the Deputy Minister, to whom those suggestions were sent. He has shown that in some particulars the suggestions made by Archbishop Taché and some others were not prudent suggestions. But are we here to discuss at this late day whether the suggestions were prudent or not? Why the Government should have determined in 1879 what portions of these suggestions were prudent, and they should have acted upon them. The petitions should have been taken out of the pigeon-holes, and the Minister instead of hieing away to

England and other parts should have hied himself away personally to the North-West and should have enquired into the facts connected with the grievances, and have put forward his hand and dealt with them, remedied them and removed them. But he did not do it, and we have sad results in 1885. But the matter did not end there. In the spring of 1880 the half-breeds in Manitoba village, in the North-West Territory, petitioned Sir John A. Macdonald again. That petition is to be found on page 41. They are getting restless; they are wondering that the petitions forwarded by them and endorsed by their priests, bishops and magistrates, by the North-West Council and all the legally constituted authorities of the country, should have been treated with contempt, and they are forwarding other petitions in which they set forth at still greater length their grievances in this regard. They state:

"And whereas the continued delay in ascertaining and investigating said claims is creating great and general dissatisfaction throughout the Territories, we your petitioners do humbly pray that you will cause a commission to be issued at an early day to enquire into and confirm the said claims, not only with regard to scrip and allotments of land as provided for in Manitoba, but, moreover, to confirm the titles of land occupied by or purchased by parties from occupants of claims taken previously to the transfer of the Territories to the Dominion of Canada."

The Government were not only aware of the existence of those grievances, the fact had been pressed on them time and again, month after month, but there was the further and important fact, which had been pressed on them, that the existence of those grievances and the delay in their removal were causing great and general dissatisfaction from one end of the Territory to the other. What, then, is the use of the hon. gentleman urging to-day, in the face of facts so plain and palpable, that those grievances had nothing to do with the outbreak in 1885. Following in the same string we have the petition of a large number of residents near Edmonton. I am afraid to say how many; I did not count them, but their names covered two columns of a whole page and must number 100. I will not trouble the House by reading them. They repeat the statements in a previous petition respecting delay. I will read some of their own words:

"And whereas the continued delay in ascertaining and investigating said claims is creating great and general dissatisfaction throughout the Territories."

I will not weary the House by reading further from the petition. So the record goes on; month after month, year after year, these poor people petitioning the authorities at Ottawa, praying and begging for some relief in this regard,

and receiving in return the stereotyped reply that the Government will take the matter into consideration, or that it will be submitted to the Minister for his consideration. But nothing is done. I say, therefore, the mover of the resolution was right in arraigning the Government and in charging them with neglect, grievous and criminal neglect, towards those poor people, and with having waited, before entertaining their grievances, until those people rose in rebellion when it was too late. The Government thus adopted the vicious system followed by all tyrants throughout the world—refusing to concede what is right at the proper time, and yielding to force when it is too late, and that in the wrong manner. I will not weary the House by going through the events of 1833-84.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. DAVIES. I do not wonder at hon. gentlemen cheering. It is a record of shame and disgrace to hon. gentlemen opposite. But we come down to the action which hon. gentlemen opposite did take. The hon. Minister has said they moved. When was the first record of their motion? In January, 1885, the Minister of the Interior came down with a recommendation of what? That a commission issue to settle those grievances and entertain the claims of the half-breeds? No. But a recommendation that a commission issue to take evidence of the unenumerated half-breeds of Manitoba and confining it to them alone, repudiating by inference the claims and rejecting by inference the claim of all the half-breeds of the North-West outside of Manitoba to be treated in the same manner as the Manitoba half-breeds were. When hon. gentlemen opposite say they moved before the rebellion, let us understand clearly what they did do. I refer to the report of the Minister, to be found on page 17. I want to place it on record, because I have heard it stated more than once by leading members of the Government that they did not wait till after the rebellion took place to meet the grievances, but they had taken steps months before the rebellion broke out; and I say that statement is not in accordance with the record. The report of the Minister is as follows:—

"Certified copy of a report of a Committee of the honorable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on 28th January, 1835.

"On a memorandum, dated 26th January, 1885, from the Minister of the Interior, submitting that it is desirable, with a view to settling equitably the claims of half-breeds in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, who would have been entitled to land had they resided in Manitoba at the time of the transfer and filed their claims in due course under the Manitoba Act, and also of those who, though not residing in Manitoba and equitably entitled to participate in the grant, but did not

do so, to ascertain the number of such half-breeds; and recommending that he be authorised to obtain an enumeration of them, and to employ three persons to make such enumeration.

"The committee concur in the foregoing recommendations, and they advise that the requisite authority be granted."

So this recommendation, meagre as it was, short as it was, did not go further than the Manitoba half-breeds. It did not touch the half-breeds of the plains; and it did not say what the policy of the Government was. It held out no promise; it did not point out to what extent the Government would yield, whether it would grant certain parts of the petitions or the whole. It is merely a recommendation of one part of the claim and one part only. Then we find nothing more is done. We find events moving very rapidly, reports tumbling in on the Government that their inaction, their criminal inaction, is bearing its legitimate fruit. We find the Government being told that the half-breeds, despairing of redressing by petitions and by legitimate means their grievances, are unfortunately rising in arms. We find a telegram coming in on 11th March, from Superintendent Crozier, stating that the half-breeds are excited, that they are moving about more than usual and are preparing arms. On 11th March there was another despatch from Superintendent Crozier, stating:

"Half-breeds greatly excited; reported they threaten on Carleton before 16th. Half-breeds refuse to take freight or employment for Government; will stop all freight coming into country after 16th of this month; getting arms ready; leader will not allow people to leave home as they may be required."

On 14th March, Lieut.-Colonel Irvine telegraphed:

"Lieutenant-Governor received telegram, dated Carleton, to-day, from Crozier, saying half-breed rebellion may break out any moment, and joined by Indians, and asking that his division be largely increased. Would recommend that at least 100 men be sent at once, before roads break up. Please instruct."

We find a telegram to Colonel Irvine, dated Ottawa, 15th March:

"Start for the north, quickly as possible, with all available men up to 100. Telegraph marching out; state and report when passing telegraph stations."

On 19th March there is a telegram from Superintendent Deane, dated Regina:—

"The following received from Superintendent Crozier: 'Rumor to-night Indians being tampered with; large force should be sent without delay that arrests may be made if necessary to prevent further and continuous trouble from Riel and followers.'"

In a word, we find that the Government policy of masterly inactivity had borne its legitimate fruit, that their policy of criminal inaction had borne the only legitimate fruit that could be expected from it. We find that these people

took up arms, and then only action was taken by the Government. On 30th March, after the rebellion had broken out, we find a report of the Committee of the Privy Council acknowledging that their previous report of January, to which I have referred, was altogether incomplete, and reciting that it was necessary to go much further.

"The Minister of Interior, on representations made that it was desirable to have made an enumeration of the half-breeds in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, who would have been entitled to land had they resided in Manitoba at the time of the transfer, was authorised by Your Excellency in Council, under date the 28th of January last, to appoint commissioners and the following gentlemen were accordingly appointed to carry into effect the said order of Your Excellency in Council, namely: William Purvis Rochford Street, of the city of London, in the Province of Ontario, one of Her Majesty's counsel learned in the law, who is to be chairman of the commission; Roger Goulet of the town of St. Boniface, in the Province of Manitoba, dominion lands surveyor; and Amedée Edmond Forget, of the town of Regina, in the Provisional District of Assinaboia, clerk of the North-West Council and barrister-at-law.

"The Minister of Interior is of opinion that the scope of the enquiry to be made by the commissioners appointed under the authority of the order of Your Excellency in Council above mentioned should be enlarged."

The rebellion had changed their position. It had enabled them to grasp things which they should have grasped months and years before; it enabled them to see that the policy of inaction and delay would not do any longer, because we find the Minister recommending the enlargement of the scope of the commission, so as to include the half-breeds of the plains outside of Manitoba, as well as the others. That is what we have, on the 30th day of March, after the rebellion is in full force, and, therefore, when the Government claim that they took action which ought to have prevented the rising, we appeal to the record and let it show that their action was taken long after the rebellion broke out. Even on the 4th of April, 1885, the authority which they gave was not complete; they had not fully mastered the subject yet, and the commissioner appointed to take evidence, telegraphed them on the 4th of April, to the following effect:—

"SOUTH CENTRE, MANITOBA, 4th April, 1885.

"If desired by half-breeds, would it not be advisable to grant scrip one sixty or two forty dollars, permitting them to acquire title to lands in occupation through possession? Otherwise Government really gives nothing for Indian title."

That telegram is explained by a letter forwarded by the commissioner next day. The Minister and his Deputy evidently did not understand the question. It is true that some years previously, when a petition came from the half-breeds setting forth their grievances, the Deputy Minister said that he could not understand the petition and Mr. Law-

rence Clarke came to his rescue, and pointed out what the Minister and his Deputy evidently did not know that an Act of Parliament had provided the means whereby this claim of the half-breeds to the Indian title should be extinguished—pointed out that it was the duty of the Government to act in that way, and if they were ignorant of their own Acts they were to blame and not the half-breeds. There appears to have been a repetition of this state of things in 1885. They did not seem to know then, and Mr. Street follows up the telegram I have already read with the following :

"Commission agree in recommending that power be granted them to deal with occupying half-breeds in the manner summarised in my message of yesterday; also, if possible, to enable commission to settle claims of supplementary Manitoba half-breeds by allowing them the same terms as North-West half-breeds."

That was followed the next day by this letter to the Minister:

"WINNIPEG, 5th April, 1885.

"MY DEAR SIR DAVID,—We arrived here early this morning. I met my fellow-commissioners at the Dominion Land Office at ten o'clock. They introduced the subject as to which I telegraphed you yesterday, and spoke very strongly as to its being one which was likely to be a serious stumbling-block in our dealings with the half-breeds. Lest you should not fully have understood my telegram, I will shortly state the point. Suppose we find that a half-breed has been, upon and since 5th July, 1870, in occupation of a parcel of, say 160 acres, under circumstances which, if he were a white settler, would entitle him to a grant of the land under the homestead clauses of the Dominion Lands Act: under the authority we now possess we could, if he were the head of a family, allow him nothing more than 160 acres; we could allow him nothing for his claim as a half-breed; and, inasmuch as the Government has all along been purporting to deal with the half-breeds as if they had some general rights beyond those of ordinary incoming settlers, my fellow-commissioners say that great dissatisfaction and disappointment will be created if we give to these occupying half-breeds only that which any ordinary settler can claim, and nothing for the extinguishment of his Indian title."

This shows to me that this matter had never received from the Government of the day and from the Minister in charge, that consideration and examination which it ought to have had, or else we must accept the other proposition which is probably the correct one, that the Government did not desire and never intended to give to these half-breeds any of the concessions which they were authorised and directed to give by Statute, and had taken power to give as far back as 1879. They led these poor people to believe, by passing a Statute enabling them to confer on these half-breeds the same rights as had been conferred on the half-breeds of Manitoba—they led them to believe that these same rights would be granted them; they kept that hope dangling

before them for five or six years; they worked them up to a state of dissatisfaction and discontent, and as the mover of the resolution said to-day, even when the rebellion was on the verge of breaking out the real meaning and intention of the Government can be gathered from the speech made by the leader of the Government in this House, on, I think, the 26th day of March, wherein he stated that the half-breeds must make their choice between the rights which the Indians could get and the rights which white men could get, but that they had no other rights. Well, Sir, it is known that they had other rights. Those rights had been conceded to the Manitoba half-breeds; those rights had been ratified by Parliament in 1879, and recognised by the authorities time and again, and on the 26th of March, he comes in and gives you the key to the meaning of the Order in Council of the 26th of January in the following words:—

“As a whole the half-breeds have been told that if they desired to be considered as Indians there are most liberal reserves that they could go with the others; but that if they desired to be considered as white men they would get 160 acres of land as homesteads. But they are not satisfied with that; they want to get land scrip of equal quantity—I think upwards of 200 acres—and then get, as a matter of course, their homesteads as well.”

That is the conclusion of the whole matter. After five or six long weary years, after money has been spent by the half-breeds in their efforts to get their rights, after petitions and delegations had been sent to Ottawa in their efforts to get their rights, after memorials from the North-West Council, and from individual members of that Council had been forwarded begging that those rights should be given, when the whole country is in a state of turmoil, and the half-breeds are on the verge of rising to get by force that which is denied to them by peaceable measures, the hon. gentleman rises, and practically he says: You have no rights except as Indians or as white men, and those rights, which as half-breeds, the Parliament of Canada has guaranteed to you time and again, I for one do not recognise. That then is the conclusion of the whole matter, and if it did not bring about the rebellion, it contributed largely to bringing it about, and I say that hon. gentlemen can fairly be arraigned, and I charge them before this Parliament, and before this country, of having, by their inaction, by their cold, cruel and callous neglect, by what they are pleased to term their masterly inactivity, with having contributed to drive those people into a state of desperation, when the only conclusion to their ignorant minds was that redress which they could not get by peaceable mea-

tures they could get by a resort to arms. Unfortunately they resorted to arms, and that unfortunate termination resulted, it is true, in their getting their rights ; but it resulted, also, in the expenditure of vast millions of money by the taxpayers of this country, and the shedding of the blood of many of our fellow countrymen. I say the Minister of the Interior has evaded the charge made by my hon. friend ; that he has not dared to come forward and state that anyone of those petitions were not forwarded ; that any one of the facts on which he based his charge were not true, but he evades it, and he talks about settlers' rights and colonisation companies, and affidavits, and other subjects altogether foreign to the one before the House, in the attempt to lead the House and the country to believe that there is nothing in this motion. Believing as I do, that the statements made in that motion are not over-charged, and believing that the Government are directly and criminally responsible for the rebellion—responsible for their neglect, for their indifference, and for the contempt with which they treated all the petitions of these men, I will cordially second the motion and give my vote in favor of it.

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